UNCOVERING SEEDS FOR AWAKENING AND LIVING IN THE SPIRIT: A CROSS CULTURAL STUDY OF JOHN SUNG AND JOHN WESLEY

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by

Chin Cheak Yu

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Abstract

Uncovering Seeds for Awakening and Living in the Spirit: A Cross Cultural Study of John Sung and John Wesley

by Chin Cheak Yu

This dissertation addresses two problems in Christian religious education theory and practice: first, the lack of a model for awakening people to the work of the Holy Spirit personally and communally; second, the lack of a theory that nurtures Christian religious experience and evokes spiritual awakening. In particular, few present models account for Chinese Christian experience.

The primary purpose of this dissertation in addressing the above problems is to uncover seeds for a Spirit-centered education grounded in spiritual practices. Drawing from a cross-cultural study of John Sung's and John Wesley's spiritual experiences, we can draw implications that are unique for Chinese churches.

This dissertation presents an historical and biographical study of the religious experiences and practices of John Sung (an early twentieth century Chinese Methodist revivalist) and John Wesley (an eighteenth century Anglican priest, revivalist and founder of Methodism). Commonalities emerge that inspire a Spirit-centered education. Both leaders experienced spiritual awakening. Both affirmed that spiritual awakenings could be nurtured through explicit invitation of the Holy Spirit and other spiritual practices. Finally, both perceived that seeds for awakening and living in the Spirit include spiritual practices of prayer, scripture, witness, hymn/chorus praises and journal writing.

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The study of their divergent experiences of the Holy Spirit will indicate the unique Chinese spiritual experiences. Sung's experience was displayed more in allegorical stories, public confession, witness, and healing of the sick. Wesley's experience of the Spirit was displayed in inward and outward holiness. In contrast to Sung, Wesley captured the English experience. Both offer inspiration for Chinese churches.

The body of this dissertation is presented in five parts: first, an overview of structure and method; second, two chapters tracing the role of the Spirit in Chinese Christianity and in educational theory in the United States; third, two chapters focusing on Wesley's and Sung's understandings of the Holy Spirit; fourth, two chapters on models for spiritual revival and Christian education inspired by them; fifth, implications for curriculum and pedagogy in Christian education.

The Spirit-centered education inspired by this study aims at nurturing spiritual awakening and evoking passions for holiness and mission, especially in Chinese churches.

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Preface

The title of this dissertation, "Uncovering Seeds for Awakening in the Spirit," was shaped and continues to be transformed by three women. They evoked me to seek the spiritual dimensions of experience in education, particularly to uncover the practices and unconventional resources that awaken us to the Spirit. These women served as birth mothers to germinate the seeds of God's grace, God's calling, and God's life in me. They connected me to my inmost being, to God's calling, to life, and to a world outside myself, to a continuing mission of birthing life, hope and love.

The first woman is my paternal grandmother, Liu Chiu Kiew, who grew up in China at the turn of the twentieth century, migrating later to Malaysia as my grandfather's bride. Literally a mid-wife in her village, she delivered most of the babies there. Since she spoke only her native Fowchow dialect, I communicated with her through sign language and translations, like most immigrant children with their grandparents. I knew her from stories of her tragic motherhood, raising 11 children, losing four, and suffering with my alcoholic grandfather. Given her petite size and the shape of her one-time bound feet, I had judged her to be an insignificant woman. I did not realize her significance until the day of her funeral in 1971, and years later, when I discovered that, as one of John Sung's disciples, she carried out a ministry of healing.

Three things spoke to me during that funeral which awakened my spirit to search for her experience of God and mission. First, I was struck by the fact she passed away so peacefully, on her face a great smile showing her teeth as if angels

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were accompanying her. Second, most of the village showed up for her funeral and procession to the graveyard. A beggar was weeping, as though mourning for his own mother. This intrigued me about her life and mission that reached out to the community. Third, the scripture read at the funeral kept ringing in my head, drawing me to church and awakening me to the Spirit, who speaks to us in many forms if we are open.[1] Before that, I had gone to Sunday school only when I visited her and that was in Fowchow dialect. My awakening came as a grace, as God's calling to know God, to know myself in relation to my heritage and my mission, and it began with Scripture.

The second mother to me was my maternal great grandmother. I never knew her name, only as my 'poy tai'-- greatnanny. Like my paternal grandmother, she was a small woman who had been a widow most of her life. She lived with us for some years and practically raised me until I was 11 years old. She was not a Christian, and though she was from Hakka Province, which favors girls, she was even more traditional than my grandmother in her preference for males. A great cook, she prepared a feast each day, so that the aroma filled the whole house. However, she would always save the best pieces of chicken leg or desserts for my brothers, for which I always teased her, saying that it was her granddaughter who was good to her, not the men. She seemed bitter about her gender. For her, cooking was therapy, and I loved her for cultivating rituals of cooking and feasting in my life.

However, when she died I regretted not leading her to Christ. I had

[1] John 12:24: "Truly, truly, I say to you unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (RSV)

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attempted to share Jesus by explaining Christian doctrines to her. However, they were too difficult for her to comprehend, so I promised to tell her more at another time. She died before we could talk further, and that created a drive in me to find a simple approach to evangelism and nurturing Christian formation, so that even an illiterate grandmother could receive Christ. Reflection on her life and how I failed her served as God's calling for me to seek a holistic way to bring people to the experience of the Spirit. In following this drive, I found both John Sung's simple way and John Wesley's plain language and their spiritual experiences as having potential to nurture spiritual awakenings within Chinese people.

The third woman is my own birth mother, Cheng Kim Foong, who not only gave me life, but continued to teach me about life even after she died in 1977. She was privileged to have a higher education and taught elementary school. She and my dad, also a teacher, instilled in me a love of education and a deep respect for their role as educators which they modeled for me. As a teacher I realized I could always help others to experience the connection between education and daily life. I visualized this process in the metaphor of nurturing seeds in the minds and lives of those being taught. In the process of education, the seeds that are planted in a child's upbringing and through God's work will germinate and take shape in the beliefs and values that guide a person through a whole lifetime. This metaphor of the seed has become an important image to me, which I will use throughout this dissertation in reference to that which is planted by parents, teachers, life experiences, and the Holy Spirit to lead us towards wholeness.

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My mother, who suffered five years with cancer, was converted to Christianity shortly before her death. My pain at letting go emerged when I mourned not having a mom to share the joys of my life--graduations, wedding, ordinations, pregnancy, postpartum. However, through exposure to women's spirituality, which showed me how much we could learn from our mothers, I have once again connected with my mom in a deep way.[2] Through dreams in which my mom visits me, I realize that she has never left me and is constantly with me, not only in my joys, but also in my valleys of fear, and the small experiences of death that I encounter in sorrow, loss, and pain. In these connections with my mother, I experience God's grace. This awakening of my connection with the dead draws me to awaken to spiritual experiences in myself and others. This study is a beginning of my work -- as a 'half-baked' theologian[3] -- to connect the Chinese experience of John Sung and John Wesley with my heritage as a woman, and to integrate their models with the Chinese experience of spirituality. For me, for each of us, education for awakening in the Spirit begins at the point of uncovering our formative spiritual experiences. My comparison of John Sung and John Wesley tells their story of that awakening.

[2] Pui-lan Kwok, "Mothers and Daughters, Writers and Fighters," in Inheriting Our Mothers' Gardens: Feminist Theology in Third World Perspective, eds, Letty Russell, Pui-Lan Kwok, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, Katie Geneva Cannon, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988); Maria Harris, Dance of the Spirit: The Seven Steps of Women's Spirituality (New York: Bantam Books, 1989). I owe many insights to these authors and also to my study under Mary Elizabeth Moore, Ann Taves and Karen Torjesen. Through them I have learned to treasure women's experience, to honor our being and becoming women, our birthing from women, and our heritage as women. Although the two figures I have chosen to study are male, my experience and understanding of women continues to draw me toward an awakening to the Spirit and toward implementing the knowledge of the Spirit in teaching and life practices.

[3] Kwok, "Mothers and Daughters," 31. This is Dr. Kwok's terminology.

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem and Purpose of the Study

Christian Education theorists have given little attention to the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to distinctive historical and cultural contexts, particularly the Chinese context. In particular, Christian education theory has not benefited from a thorough analysis of the Christian revivals in China, including the Chinese revivals of John Sung. Yet, these revivals have played an important role in the survival and growth of Christianity during China's closure to missionary and Western influence. Both Christian education and Chinese churches would benefit from a study of spiritual awakening among Chinese Christians under the leadership of John Sung. Also valuable would be a comparison between John Sung's and John Wesley's understandings of the Holy Spirit. This comparison is historically important because of Wesley's influence on Sung; it is theologically important because it reveals much about pneumatology and the Holiness Movement's contribution to indigenous Chinese Christian leadership and Chinese understandings of Christian religious education.

Much can be learned from the surprising ways in which the Holy Spirit has worked in China. China was closed to the world after 1949 leaving it without missionary and Western influence, especially during the 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution. The rest of the world presumed that Christianity would be eliminated from China. However, according to the estimate of the China Christian Council's research, between 8.5 and 12.6 million Christians existed in China in 1995; in Jiangsu Province, alone, the number of Christians increased from 125,000 in 1985 to 900,000 in 1995, a sevenfold increase in

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just ten years.[1] According to the Chinese Church Research Center (CCRC) in Hong Kong, there are actually 65 million Protestants in China today; that same report claims that "the Church in China has grown 60-fold rather than 10-fold in the last 50 years."[2] Whichever figure we take, it is clear that the seeds of the missionary movement, Christian revivals and indigenous Chinese churches did not die. Growth has prevailed; the Spirit continues working actively in China without the mediation of Western culture. The purpose of the present study is to uncover the Christian heritage that was planted in the earlier years, to reflect constructively on the Chinese spiritual experience, and to interpret this Chinese Christian heritage in the light of Chinese Christian education practices.

One major difficulty in uncovering the Chinese Christian experience of the Spirit is that it has been hidden by the westernization of Christianity in Asia. American historian William R. Hutchison identified the problem: American missionaries at the turn of the twentieth century believed that "Christianity as it existed in the West had a 'right' not only to conquer the world, but to define reality for the peoples of the world."[3] Hong Kong feminist historian and theologian Kwok Pui-Lan raises three questions that challenge how the Bible is used in a cross-cultural setting: Who owns the truth? Who interprets the truth? and Who constitutes the truth?[4] Her questions will illumine for us ways to uncover Chinese experience in relation to westernization. These questions inspire us to look deeply for those stories that have been hidden and suppressed, and to

[1] "How many Christians are There in China?" China Talk, 21 June 1996, 18.

[2] Ibid. This research center includes many house churches that were reluctant to register with the Three Self Patristic Movement Churches or the China Christian Council.

[3] William R. Hutchison, "A Moral Equivalent for Imperialism: Americans and the Promotion of 'Christian Civilization,' 1880-1910," in Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era, 1880-1920, eds. Torben Christensen and William R. Hutchison (Arhus, Denmark: Aros, 1982), 174.

[4] Pui-lan Kwok, Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1995), 9-12.

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invite people to draw theology, theory and practices out of their own history and culture.

In the process of uncovering the truths that speak to Chinese experience, Kwok further distinguishes Western and Eastern thought. Western thought is more concerned with metaphysical and epistemological questions, searching for absolute truth. Eastern thought is more interested in searching for wisdom for practical living.[5] To understand Chinese experience, one has to follow the Chinese quest for wisdom and the struggle to make commonsense of our lives. With insights from her teacher Benjamin I. Schwartz, Kwok shows the value of ambiguity to help scholars search between nuances: "Only the subtle, nuance difference in between, or the gray area of fruitful ambiguity can offer new opportunities for critical scholarship."[6] It is through this search for nuances that she encourages Asian scholars to listen deeply to women and marginalized people. I share her claim that the struggles for meaning among all cultures are equally valid. In addition, we need a fuller, more detailed picture of Chinese spirituality that draws on the historical, cultural context, and their actual spiritual experiences.

Another difficulty in uncovering seeds of the Spirit is the dual challenge of bridging the gap between knowledge and experience, and of uncovering models of Christian religious education in partnership with the Holy Spirit. There have been many theological and educational debates on the dualism of theory versus practice, immanence versus transcendence, nurture versus conversion, tradition versus contemporary experience, and rationalism versus supernaturalism. Since the debates of James Smart and Edward Farley on the place of the Holy Spirit in religious education, many have tried

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 3.

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to integrate the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in relation to human nature and formation.[7] Nothing, however, has been done in the Chinese context to uncover the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to educational practice. This dissertation is intended to fill that gap. I will argue that the study of the Spirit's work in both historical and cultural contexts will offer seeds to yield educational theory and practice, opening people to God's Spirit and preparing them for mission and holistic living.

In addition, since I first read John Sung's diary five years ago, I have believed his works could revitalize Chinese churches since his influence on the church still prevails. Reading his diary and following his prayer for the Spirit of Wesley to be poured on him, I am amazed to find similar patterns of the work of the Holy Spirit in both of them.[8]

My passion is parallel to Sung's and Wesley's search for access to God through the Spirit. I share their common desire to guide people in their journey of faith in the midst of struggle. My purpose in this dissertation is to make the insights learned from studying the religious experiences of John Sung and John Wesley, and their models for religious practices in contexts, relevant to the formation of Christian education theory and practices which take seriously the role of the Holy Spirit. In this way, inadequacies in

[7] Since Edward Farley and James Smart debated on the place of the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian religious education in the 1960s, little work has been done on this issue, with a few notable exceptions. For resources see Frank Rogers, "Dance with Grace: Toward a Spirit-Centered Education," Religious Education, 89 (Summer 1994): 377-95; Carol Hess, "Educating in the Spirit," Religious Education, 86 (Summer 1991): 383-98; Susanne Johnson, Christian Spiritual Formation in the Church and Classroom (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989); Harris, Dance of the Spirit; James Loder, The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences (San Franscisco: Harper and Row, 1981); Mary-Elizabeth Moore, "Meeting in the Silence: Meditation as the Center of Congregational Life," in Congregations: Their Power To Form and Transform, ed. C. Ellis Nelson (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973); and Dean G. Blevins, John Wesley and the Means of Grace: An Approach to Christian Religious Education, Ph.D. Diss., Claremont School of Theology, 1999 (Ann Arbor, UMI, 1999).

[8] John Sung, The Diary of His Spiritual Life [hereafter Sung, Diary], compiled by Tian-Zeng Sung (Hong Kong: Eng Yu Evangelistic Mission, 1995), xvi, 158, 176. Sung always prayed for the spirit of Wesley, Finney, and Moody to anoint him and to ignite the flames of revival in China. He claimed to follow Wesley's basic essentials for revivals and indicated that China would need five John Wesleys for revivals.

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both Eastern and Western Christian education theory and practices may be corrected. The design of the dissertation will be four-fold: 1) to examine the history of Chinese Christian revivals in historical contexts and also the history of Christian religious theory in its reaction to revivalism in the United States; 2) to present the convergent and divergent understandings of the Holy Spirit in the biographies of John Sung (1901-1944) and John Wesley (1703-1791); 3) to identify their models for spiritual revival and Christian education as resources to inform Christian religious education; and 4) to develop guidelines for educational theory and practice in relation to distinctive contexts, so that the church's mission and educational ministry may be reformed in a way that places experiences of the Holy Spirit at the center of Christian religious education.

Thesis and Argument

Christian religious education theory should be aimed at preparing people to be awakened by the Holy Spirit and evoking their religious passions for mission and holistic living. My thesis is that the cross-cultural study of John Sung's and John Wesley's spiritual experience, even within two different historical and cultural contexts, can uncover seeds for a Spirit-centered education grounded in spiritual practices. In addition, from the divergence of these two figures, we can draw implications that are unique for Chinese churches.

I believe that an interpretive biographical study of John Sung and John Wesley can provide guidelines for a theory and practice of Christian religious education. John Sung is the key figure because he was the "model Revivalist" among Chinese revivalists; John Wesley is compared because he influenced John Sung, Chinese Methodist Churches, and the larger Holiness Movement.

For Sung and Wesley, to be fired up by the Spirit is not just enthusiasm; their respective biographers claim that the Spirit initiated and led them, and then they invited

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thousands of people to experience that Spirit. I will argue that we can trace seeds for awakening in the Spirit from this cross-cultural study of Sung and Wesley, and that in their experiences we can find models for spiritual awakening.

The historical findings provide guidelines for the present, recognizing that each historical and cultural context can yield its own theory and practice. In the manner of C. S. Song's story theology,[9] I want to explore stories of Sung and Wesley, and to develop an open-ended theory and practice of Christian education. This is more promising than doctrine centered approaches that actually restrict thinking about God. Here the traditioning model of Mary Elizabeth Moore is very helpful. It is one of my guides for discerning the voice of God in historical and current contexts in the process of continuity and change.[10]

Assumptions

Two assumptions undergird this dissertation. The first assumption is that spiritual leaders and churches do not plant sufficient seeds for spiritual awakening and living. Spiritual awakening, as James Loder indicates, is the sphere of the Holy Spirit where "[t]he Divine Spirit dramatically and powerfully penetrates and permeates the whole person" and the realization will embrace the person's past, present and future "under the power and purposes of God."[11] Spiritual awakening in this dissertation is defined as

[9] C.S. Song, The Believing Heart (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 50-75. In this new book, Song states that he is still developing his story theology without first having a theory of theology. He says, "Is it possible to do story theology without first developing theories of story theology? Well, why not? Men and women of all time from all places--particularly those of us from Asia--have been practicing story theology---Theories can come later. Theories should not stand in the way of story theology as an art, an art practiced by people from different walks of life in different life situations." xi.

[10] Mary-Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 15-16.

[11] James Loder, The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in the Theological Perspective (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 232.

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God's Spirit awakening people to God's presence, love, grace, vision, calling, deliverance, healing, and mission. In spite of the limited human contribution to spiritual awakening, this dissertation assumes that, by exploring the understandings of the Holy Spirit and spiritual practices of Sung and Wesley, we can uncover seeds for nurturing spiritual awakenings and can draw implications for a Spirit-centered education. One cannot easily characterize or describe the work of the Holy Spirit, but I hope to discern how the Holy Spirit was understood in the Chinese revivals of John Sung. With keen eyes and sharp ears for deep listening, as suggested by my former professors Maria Harris and James Loder, we can trace historical and contemporary resources for awakening people in the Spirit.[12]

The second assumption is that Sung's and Wesley's understandings of spirituality can inform Christian religious education theory and nurture spiritual revivals and holy living. The fact that Sung adopted many of Wesley's practices for revivals, and that revivals happened, suggests that apostolic faith and Pentecostal experience can be reclaimed. Sung and Wesley were dramatic witnesses to that possibility. Through revisiting and re-interpreting Sung's and Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit and their spiritual practices, we can better guide leaders into religious passion and ministry. This is explored through Ann Taves' mapping of religious experiences in Wesleyan communities and her analysis of Wesley's understanding of the witness of the Spirit.[13] The discoveries do not serve as universal norms, but as guides to evaluate educational

[12] Maria Harris, Teaching and Religious Imagination (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987); and Loder, Logic of the Spirit, and Transforming Moment.

[13] Ann Taves, Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 5. Taves' book provides key resources to understand Wesley's or Methodiam's understanding of the Holy Spirit. It provides the central narrative thread to understand the heritage of Holiness and Pentecostal Movements, especially in their embrace of the experience of the Holy Spirit with greater enthusiasm than most other Protestants.

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ministry that is oriented toward expanding vision, evoking religious passions, and supporting holy living.

Methods Employed

The primary method for this study is an Interpretive Biographical Research. John Creswell explains that biographical study includes oral history and the study of different accounts by autobiographers and biographers; it always needs to be interpreted and re-interpreted.[14] This method with multiple dimensions is a helpful tool for discerning a person's biography. Moreover, since Sung's diary was only recently recovered and is still a sensitive issue in China, a comprehensive method can better discern which interpretations speak justly and which are mere political interpretations.[15]

Norman K. Denzin's Interpretative Biography guides this research because of Denzin's recognition of the interpretative factor. Denzin says, "We create the persons we write about, just as they create themselves when they engage in storytelling practices."[16] With this awareness of the active dimensions in interpretation, I aim at uncovering and interpreting the hidden movement of the Holy Spirit, the Holiness Movement's influence on Christianity in China, as well as the themes that converge and diverge in Sung and Wesley. Understanding that one oral history cannot stand alone with its subjective interpretation, I bring multiple perspectives into the discussion to clarify the complexity

[14] Creswell distinguishes biographical study as "the life story of an individual whose life is written by someone else other than the individuals themselves using archival documents and records"; and posits that "oral history is an approach in which the researcher gathers personal recollections of events, their causes and effects from an individual and several individuals. This information may be collected through tape recordings or through written works of individuals who have died or who are still living." John W. Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998), 49.

[15] In my conversation with John Sung's daughter, who is the editor of his diary and recovered his many journal volumes, she mentioned the sensitivity of the matter and that the family has been jailed. She left out political references that might jeopardize the family. Her sister was not listed as editor of the rest of her father's journal until she passed away recently.

[16] Norman K. Denzin, Interpretive Biography (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1989), 82.

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of the stories and their interpretations.

The documents studied include: autobiographies, biographies, diaries, letters, life histories, personal experience stories, oral histories and personal histories.[17] Creswell highlights Denzin's steps that influence my guidelines: 1) to gather stories from concrete contextual biographical materials; 2) to explore stories that are clustered around themes, indicating pivotal events or epiphanies in an individual life; 3) to search for multiple meanings, explaining the different interpretations of their ideologies and social interactions in groups; and 4) and to provide a cross-interpretation of Sung and Wesley.[18] I intend also to engage findings from Sung and Wesley in dialogue with other theological and educational resources. In the final chapter, I draw guidelines for Christian religious education, especially for Chinese Diaspora Churches.

Resources Used

Resources include five primary types: 1) Historical resources on the mission movement and revival movement in China; 2) history, theory and practices of religious education; 3) works on John Sung regarding his understanding of the Holy Spirit; 4) works on John Wesley in regarding his understanding of the Holy Spirit; and 5) secondary resources on Sung and Wesley.

Scope and Limitations

This study includes an in-depth examination and interpretation of the Holy Spirit's work as revealed in the writings and lives of John Sung and John Wesley, considered within their contexts.

Although the story of John Wesley's awakening experiences is told and

[17] Ibid., 7.

[18] Creswell, 50-51.

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interpreted in relationship to John Sung's, Sung serves as the key figure in the dialogue. My focus is to construct theory and practice for Christian religious education in light of the Chinese context. I leave to other scholars the wider range of questions regarding doctrines, theological and philosophical debates in the Holiness Movement, and regarding the relation between religious enthusiasm and human development in Wesleyan scholarship. These subjects are be touched on but not elaborated here, as this work has been done extensively elsewhere.

Importance of the Dissertation

We must find ways to bring life and passion into Christian religious education, as well as into the mission and ministries of Chinese churches. Few studies of the theory and practice of Christian religious education have been conducted in relation to Chinese historical and cultural contexts.[19] The present study is particularly significant in offering Chinese churches and Western Christian educators a way to appreciate the role of the Holy Spirit in the indigenization of the Chinese church. It is hoped that this appreciation will stir Chinese churches and Christian educators (both East and West) to recognize and nurture spiritual awakening and support for holy living. In addition, no comparative study has been done on Sung and Wesley, or on the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Chinese context. This study has the potential to clarify connections between the rich heritage of Chinese and Methodist traditions, as embodied in John Sung's ministry.

[19] Russell G. Moy, Chinese American and Jewish Christians: Toward a Multi-Racial Religious Education Theory and a New Testament Curriculum, Ph.D. Diss., Claremont School of Theology, 1995 (Ann Arbor, UMI, 1995); and Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng's article, "Inclusive Language in Asian North American Churches: Non-Issue or Null Curriculum?" Journal of Asian and Asian American Theology 2, no.1 (Summer 1997): 21-36. Both Moy and Ng focused on the North American Chinese context.

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Outline of the Contents

The heart of this dissertation is a presentation of John Sung's and John Wesley's understandings of the Holy Spirit and their models for spiritual revival and Christian education as resources to inform Christian religious education. The structure is divided into five parts. Part One is an introduction to the subject and method. It includes the first chapter, in which I propose a cross-cultural dialogue between John Sung and John Wesley to uncover seeds for Christian religious education, especially those practices that contribute to spiritual awakening and living for Chinese churches in the Diaspora. The term Chinese church in the Diaspora refers to Chinese church outside of China.

Part Two consists of two chapters -- 2 and 3 -- reflecting on contemporary contexts and their antecedents, focusing on crises and possibilities. From the presentation of the historical sources, these chapters reveal a neglect of and a reaction against integrating the work of the Holy Spirit by missionaries and Christian religious educators. In Chapter 2, by examining the crises and possibilities of Christianity in China, I will provide an overview of the contributions of progressive Christianity and revivals in China. Both traditions contributed to indigenization and indigenous Chinese Christian leadership. Progressive Christianity made significant contributions to social reforms; and the Holiness Movement and Christian revivals shaped Chinese spiritual experiences. Both of these traditions, progressive Christianity and Christian revivals, need to be studied with equal light. The awareness of this heritage is significant in revealing what practices Chinese Christians saw as marks of the Holy Spirit's work, and how they nurtured Chinese spiritual experiences and shaped John Sung.

Chapter 3 is an overview of experiences of, and reaction to, the Holy Spirit in the United States. Particular attention is given to Christian religious education theory, which

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has been deficient in the study of the Holy Spirit. The debate between conversion and growth paradigms demonstrates that Christian religious education in the United States has often been shaped by a reaction against revivalism. These two overviews will illuminate for us the deficiencies of Christian religious education. In the Western dualistic mindset, religious educators neglected to integrate the work of the Holy Spirit. This neglect is slowly being corrected.

Part Three includes two chapters -- 4 and 5-- uncovering seeds for awakening and living in the Spirit, focusing on John Wesley's and John Sung's understandings of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 4 is a study of Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit through exploring several themes in his life and ministry. Chapter 5 is a study of Sung's understanding of the Holy Spirit in the similar themes of his life and ministry. These understandings will provide inspirations and guidance for a Spirit-centered education.

Part Four consists of two chapters -- 6 and 7—exploring John Wesley's and John Sung's models for spiritual revival and Christian education. Chapter 6 is a study of Wesley's model, and Chapter 7 is a study of Sung's model for spiritual revival and Christian education. Their spiritual practices and implicit modeling of Christian education are the focus in this part.

Part Five includes Chapter 8: Christian Religious Education for Awakening and Living in the Spirit, which offers a comparative study of John Sung and John Wesley in relation to curriculum and pedagogy for Christian education. Their understandings of the Holy Spirit and models of spiritual practice will inspire a Spirit-centered education that can nurture a spiritual awakening for individual Christians and the Church.

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PART TWO

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS AND THEIR ANTECEDENTS: CRISES AND POSSIBILITIES

Part two is background information. Within two chapters, I hope to discern the heritage that shaped China Christianity as well as religious education in the United States, especially reclaiming the importance of revival tradition in shaping Chinese spiritual awakening. This section seeks to provide understanding for the Christian heritage in China, the historical influence on John Sung, and to reconsider the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian religious education.

Chapter 2 is a study of crises and possibilities of Christianity in China. The analysis of crises will show the valid contributions from progressive Christianity that feature education, medical services, social reforms and indigenization of Christianity. At the same time, the Holiness movement and Christian revivals shaped Chinese spiritual experiences as well as Chinese Christian leadership. This heritage needs to be reclaimed for its insights for Christian religious education, especially for Chinese churches.

Chapter 3 is a study of Christian religious education theory in the United States. The debate between the paradigms of nurture and conversion reveals how liberal Protestantism had downplayed conversion in favor of social reforms, and how Christian religious education in the United States has often been shaped by a reaction against revivalism. In the Western dualistic mindset, religious educators neglected to integrate the role of the Holy Spirit. This neglect is slowly being corrected and will be demonstrated in the chapter.

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CHAPTER 2

Experiences and Reactions: The Holy Spirit in China in the Early Twentieth Century

In the Chinese language, "Crisis" is made up of two characters or two words, *"Hui-Chi."* The first means "danger," and the second "opportunity." Literally crisis means a "dangerous opportunity." The present study seeks to present a historical analysis of those crises for Chinese Christian churches in China that provided not only a danger but also an awakening to opportunities for Mission Boards, and most of all for progressive Christianity and Christian revivals to shape China. In addition, my analysis of the work of the Holy Spirit seeks to trace the sources for indigenous Chinese Christian leadership that were not just progressive. Indeed, the Holiness Movement also became a catalyst for indigenization and Chinese Christian revivals. Never in history was China so deeply influenced by Christianity as in the early twentieth century. The political and cultural crises in China opened up opportunities for Christianity to take shape, offering direction for mission, education, revivals, and developing an indigenous Christian leadership.

The focus of Chapter 2 is to analyze the historical, socio-cultural crises in China as well as Chinese experiences of revivals in order to uncover the factors that shaped Chinese Christianity. It especially looks at the non-Western development of Christianity in China, attempting to discern how Chinese Christians interpreted the work of the Holy Spirit, and how this shaped Chinese spiritual experiences in the early twentieth century. This analysis will allow us to

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understand the historical background of John Sung, as well as inform our educational theory and practice.

In this chapter, I will show that Christianity was deeply impacted by the shifting movements in Chinese history, including the revivals of the Holiness Movement. As a result of these movements, twentieth century Christianity in China evolved into a progressive religion with an indigenous leadership, which developed a Spirit-centered mission and educational program. John Sung was shaped by both progressive Christianity and revivals.

In this chapter, the phrase "progressive Christianity" refers to a Christian outlook that seeks to address the total human person. It is a term describing the nineteenth century mission movement that is often associated with the social gospel, Christian teachings to be progressive, and the modernist impulse of liberal theology.[1] Progressive Christianity understands salvation to refer not only to a life hereafter, but also to living the present life with the dignity of children of God. In order to address spiritual needs, Christians must at the same time address the human needs of hunger, physical illness, education, and social injustice. All efforts including science that improve human life in these areas are an essential part of a lived Christianity.

This chapter will also address the "revival tradition," often associated with an evangelical, conservative, and fundamentalist Christianity. As part of that tradition, I will especially refer to the Holiness Movement most often associated

[1] John Cobb., "The Christian Reason for being Progressive," Theology Today (Jan. 1995): 550. Cobb explains that Progress Christianization of society became an explicit goal in nineteenth-century Protestantism, as exemplified in the global mission movement.

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in China with spiritual revivals and with invoking the Holy Spirit for healing, conversion, and enlightenment. These two traditions will be examined equally in order to draw a more complete picture of Chinese spiritual experience.

Through the observations and interpretations of historians, I propose that we can lift up the heritage that shaped China's Christianity. As we observe the indigenous practices and leadership that emerged in China over the last fifty years, we will better understand how Chinese Christians interpret the work of the Holy Spirit.

Crises in China between 1900-1937

The first part of Chapter Two examines the overwhelming complexity of crises, involving both dangers and opportunities, which shaped Christianity in China during the period 1900-1937. In particular, it presents an historical analysis of Chinese experience and reactions to Christianity. It is difficult to simplify the complexity of the events that China faced; however, what I attempt is an integrative analysis, bringing together different interpretations of those crises and events in their relation to Christianity. By examining the different crises that China and the Mission Board faced, I present the different movements and opportunities in awakening Chinese Christian experience. Hopefully this will set the stage to understand John Sung's spiritual experience and contribution to Chinese churches.

I have chosen to study the era of 1900-1937, mainly because that was the major growth era for independent Christianity, as identified by two historians,

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Daniel Bay and Leung Ka-Lun.[2] I cover the historical research in China only up to 1937, even though John Sung continued his revival meetings into early 1940 when illness forced him to quit (He lived until 1944). The year 1937 also began a period of warfare, and, as described by Bays, "it was an appropriate stopping point for a historical survey that includes both mission and native revivalism."[3] I concur with Bays that the year 1937 "really meant a new set of conditions for mission and Chinese church." After this time, China commenced "full-scale war" with Japan (1937-45), followed by the "chaos of Civil War" (1946-49), and the later restrictions on religious activities in the new Communist government (1949-1980).[4] It would be preferable for another research project to cover those later periods leading up to recent Christianity in China and the Chinese cultural reform.

Leung Ka-Lun's division of Chinese church history is very helpful in marking the early twentieth century in terms of crises, movements, and the shifting reactions towards Christianity. The eras can be classified as: 1) 1900-1920-- Christianity as Westernization; 2) 1922-1927-- Anti-Christian Movement; 3) 1927-1937--Indigenization Response and its Movements.[5] For each division I

[2] Daniel H. Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," In Modern Christian Revivals, eds. Edith L. Blumhofer and Randall Balmer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); and "The Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 1900-1937," in Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Ka-Lun Leung, Blessing Upon China - Ten Talks on the Contemporary Church History of China [in Chinese] (Hong Kong: Tien Dao Publishing House, 1988). Hereafter, the English translation of Leung's work from the Chinese is mine.

[3] Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937,"174.

[4] Ibid., 174. Bays listed the clearest classification of the different periods when China engaged in full scale wars after 1937.

[5] Leung, 120-71.

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will demonstrate that the crises were also opportunities, involving not only chaos, but also shifts of interest and challenges toward Christianity and social reform under the common theme of "saving China."

1900-1920: Christianity as Westernization

In the era of 1900-1920, according to Leung and other historians, three major movements revealed that Christianity in China was tainted with westernization, and Western culture became fused with religious reform. First came the Boxer Uprising in 1900, followed by the revolution of China in 1911, and then the New Culture movement, which ended with the May Fourth movement in 1919, also known as the Chinese Enlightenment period.[6]

The 1900 Boxer Uprising was fueled by China'a antagonism toward foreign missions. The uprising was viewed by most Chinese as an act of nationalist spirit to preserve Chinese culture.[7] It resulted in riots, the killing of missionaries and Chinese Christians, and the burning of churches; it later led to eight international attacks on China, which harmed people and property and, also, damaged China as a nation. Under the treaty that followed the uprising, the Chinese government was forced to pay massive funds to compensate for damages to eight countries; this took fifty years to pay.[8] As Chinese historian Gu Chang Sheng points out, the treaty and the actions which followed created great

[6] Leung, 120; Bays, "Chinese Revival in China," 166; Yang Shen Fu, History of Christianity in China [In Chinese] (Taiwan: Taiwan Publishing House, 1978)[translation from the Chinese is mine]; and Gu Chang Sheng, A Concise History of Christianity in China [In Chinese](Monterey Park: Evergreen Publishing, 1999), 125-26 [translation from the Chinese is mine].

[7] Gu, 106.

[8] Leung, 120; Gu, 105.

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confusion among the Chinese regarding Christianity, especially when they saw missionaries and Chinese Christians involved in the killings. In some regions, Catholic missions even demanded killing an equal number of Chinese to match the number of missionaries killed.[9]

The uprising and its resolution created long-lasting animosity that hindered China's capacity to view Christianity apart from political agendas. Nor is China willing even now to regard those missionaries and Christians killed during the uprising as deserving of honor.[10] Yet, in spite of the immense damage, opportunities opened for the spread of Christianity and Western culture after the Boxer Uprising. Why would interest in Christianity grow after the Boxer Uprising? Missionary Arthur H. Smith, cited by Paul A. Varg, described this ironic consequence. In his report to the Mission Board, Smith said that "the Boxer cataclysm had shocked the Chinese into perceiving the necessity of many changes in government, in education, in manners, in dress, in medicine, sanitation, in social appliances, etc, and hence, presumptively in religion."[11] Varg

[9] Gu, 105.

[10] Charles Hutzler, "China, Vatican Dispute Intensifies," Associated Press, 27 Sept. 2000 [newspaper on-line]; accessed 27 Sept.; available from http://www.aol.com. file AP-NY-09-27-00 1110EDT. In this dispute on October 1, 2000 and also on China national day, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association was against the Vatican's plan to canonize as saints 120 Westerners and Chinese Catholics killed in China during the Boxer uprising. It claims the Vatican is causing "public humiliation," intends to "distort and slander history, renew control over China's Catholic Church, and encourage worshippers to oppose the government." Even after one hundred years, Christianity cannot easily deny its intentions of controlling China, and Christianity remains tainted with westernization with the intention not only for social but also political reform of China.

[11] Arthur H. Smith, "Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World" Report of Commission I (World Missionary Conference, 1910). This letter is quoted in Paul A. Varg, Missionaries, Chinese and Diplomats (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 86.

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concluded that China in this era became a favorable culture-bed for religious changes.[12]

This "Boxer cataclysm," as named by Smith, ironically served as catalyst to welcome Western influence, including Christianity, into Chinese culture. Leung explains that, due to the Boxer Uprising, Chinese leaders in the Ching dynasty's higher court lost their voice and anti-foreign power, so that westernization actually became a common goal. The government supported policies for political, economic, and educational reforms.[13] Moreover, on September 21, 1900, as a result of this uprising, missionaries and Chinese leaders called for seventeen Mission Boards to evaluate the situation and suggest new directions, resulting in more missionaries and financial resources pouring into China.[14]

Using statistics of Chinese martyrs in this era, Christopher Tang, the late historian who survived many Chinese perils, illustrates the shift of interest toward Christianity. He said that "the blood and the spirit of the martyrs somehow woke China up and opened the door to welcome Christianity."[15] This interpretation is also quite common among Chinese Christians who, like Tang, witnessed the blood of the martyrs in China.

[12] Varg, 86.

[13] Leung, 120.

[14] Gu, 109 and also from Chinese Recorder, August 1901, 398-405.

[15] Christopher Tang, The First Hundred Years of Protestant Mission in China, [In Chinese]. ed. John Fan, 2nd edition. (Hong Kong: Tao Sheng Publishing House, 1990), 640-43.

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Gu Chang Sheng, the Chinese historian from China, does not settle for this simple interpretation. From the Chinese writings of that era and recent Chinese resources, he offers the interpretation that the three movements in China, beginning with the Boxer Uprising, represented an awakening to the fact that old China and the Old Confucian system did not save China from foreign attacks. In response, the Chinese turned their energy to absorbing Western civilization. The movement was geared towards the abandonment of an old culture that could no longer save China, choosing instead to vigorously import Western thought and especially the democratic ideas implied in Christianity.[16] Cited from various Chinese works and also the works published in the *Chinese Recorder*, Gu argues that this was the common understanding among Chinese. Christianity, along with the Western cultural images of democracy, science, and modernism, was considered, to be the new culture that would save China.[17] Here we can understand that the Christian message was fused with westernization. For China, westernization was fused with cultural and religious reform. The identities of Christianity and westernization were not easy to separate, and opportunities were given to mission schools to prepare young Chinese for Western civilization.

Leung Ka-Lun, the Chinese historian from Hong Kong, claims a similar understanding as to why China welcomed Christianity during the period 1900-1920. First, Chinese learning from the nineteenth century missionaries' ideology perceived Christianity as Western culture. Second, both Christians and Chinese

[16] Gu, 126-127.

[17] Ibid., Chinese Recorder, May 1921, 311-15, Zhonghua Jidu Jiaohui Nianjian [Chinese Christian Church Year Book] 1921, 134.

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expected that Christianity would point a way to save China.[18] His claim affirms my analysis that, in this period, the ideas of cultural and religious reform became fused under the term "westernization."

The second major movement between 1900 and 1921 was the Revolution of 1911. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen led the Chinese Nationalist Party in the Revolution and then became the first provisional president of the Republic of China. Sun Yat-Sen, who knew and embraced Western ideas, had strong support from the Western world against the Manchu dynasty. Many supporters of the Revolution had been the children of China's mission schools.[19] In fact, the schools and churches themselves were used to house weapons and supplies and to provide hiding places for the revolutionaries.[20]

Leung calls the period from 1900 to 1920 the First Golden age of Chinese church development. Records show at least four hundred percent growth in the number of Christians, from 95,943 in 1900 to 366, 527 in 1920. All aspects of mission work, including schools and hospitals, showed similar growth.[21]

The New Culture movement which ended with the May Fourth movement in 1919 was the third movement, showing again that westernization was fused with cultural and religious reform. William R. Hutchison points out that even missionaries who came to China with a "nationalistic zeal for expansion and

[18]Leung, 126.

[19] Leung, 121. Leung provided a list of Chinese Christians who were involved in the Revolution. The father of the Revolution, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, was the most obvious example.

[20] Ibid., 122-23.

[21] Ibid., 128-33.

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active evangelization," tended to be "less Christian but just religious," and there was a blurred distinction between Christianity and culture.[22] Paul A. Varg claims that when China turned its eyes toward Western thought, its interest was mainly in Western pragmatic humanism. He states that "the scientific method is much easier for the young Chinese to absorb than Christian theism."[23] Also John Dewey and Bertrand Russell traveled and lectured in China to great acclaim, especially by university professor Dr. Hu Shih. As Varg remarks, young Chinese showed less interest in Christianity and more interest in science and progressive education as a means to cultural reform.

Leung illustrated further that the Executive Director of the YMCA, George S. Eddy, was warmly welcomed in China. The popularity of his topic, "the weakness of China," and "the secret of solving China problems," attracted thousands. Such popularity made it clear that the Chinese people were looking for a new culture to save China.[24] At the same time, as Hutchison points out, Protestant liberalism at this time was basically shaped by the modernist impulse, which championed the ideas that God is "immanent in human cultural development" and "human society is moving toward realization of the kingdom of God."[25] Within this modernist impulse, Christianity was not about

[22] William R. Hutchison, Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 8-14.

[23] Varg, 99. Dr. Hu Shih was the lead professor from the National University in Peking that launched the May Fourth Movement, also known as the Chinese Enlightenment.

[24] Leung, 127-28. In Leung's report, the first turn-out to Eddy's lecture in 1915 numbered more than 120,000; and the second turn-out numbered more than 200,000.

[25] William R. Hutchison, The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 2.

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evangelization, directly involved in sharing the gospel, but rather was focused on China's political and cultural crises, helping to solve social problems through science and culture. It was in this spirit of secular enlightenment that the Chinese welcomed Christianity. (It would be in this same spirit that they later rejected Christianity in an anti-Christian movement.) This spirit opened doors for the mission movement and Christian education, primarily in church mission schools, and it also presented a great opportunity for missionaries to teach progressive Christianity.

In his report, Daniel Bays identified specifically at least two major religious shifts in China between 1900-1937. Though the periods overlapped, I will name the shifts here. First was the diverse make up of Protestant Christianity in China. The Protestant mission movement was no longer dominated by organized missionary societies, most of which (except the China Inland Mission) were agencies of large denominational churches in North America and Europe as in the nineteenth century. Bays explains that "after 1900 there were also a great increase in independent or 'faith' missionaries." He elaborates that "these were often from Western Christian sectarian currents such as the Holiness or Pentecostal movements, new on the Western as well as the Chinese scene," who came to China on their own and sometimes returned home after a short time.[26] These were the groups whose influence was hard to trace until recently when historian Daniel Bays and others included Chinese Christian revivals in the study of Christianity in China. I share the same concern that Chinese Christianity needs

[26] Bays, Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 307.

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to study with equal intensity the different movements involved, both the historical/political movements and revival movements.

The second shift that Bays noticed was the identity of this age with Protestant Empire building, which is consistent with Leung's observation that, at this time, Christianity in China reached its first golden age of development. In his words,

> Another distinguishing feature of the decades after 1900 was the conspicuous growth in sheer size of the Protestant church in China, especially in the 1900-1925 period. Naturally, part of this growth was in the old, well-established mission societies. These years were the culminating age of institution-building in China missions: schools, including universities, modern hospitals and clinics, staffed by increasing numbers of trained Western medical personnel; and sophisticated publication and communication system, including traveling evangelists and Christian literature.[27]

At this shift, Christianity in China launched a full scale crusade to create sophisticated mission schools and agencies -- with great success. According to Donald MacGillivray, "the number of Protestant Christian church members grew rapidly, from 37,000 in1889 to 178,000 in 1906."[28] Bays points out that these mission shifts stirred up "the growth of a spirit of independence in Chinese Protestant churches that had barely begun in the nineteenth century, but it was a prominent theme after 1900."[29] These shifts allowed influences of Christianity in

[27] Ibid.

[28] Donald MacGillivray, A Century of Protestant Missions in China (1807-1907) (Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1907), 669; and also see Bays, Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 308.

[29] Bays, Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 308.

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China from independent missionaries of the Holiness Movement and from the organized Mission Boards.

Leung further examined the consequences of the second shift in mission focus. These consequences created possibilities for Mission Boards as well as crisis. Due to China's great interest in absorbing Western civilization, many government officials or wealthy families sent their children to mission schools to promote their social status. Simultaneously, missionary societies were shifting their focus from direct evangelism to building mission schools and expanding hospitals. Leung described two phenomena of this time. First, Chinese Christians were using Western knowledge to upgrade their social status. The primary goal of mission schools no longer was to provide Chinese with Christian nurture, but to provide progressive education and civilization.[30] Second, though Christians had upgraded their social status, the missionary target in China had been the poor; therefore, until 1949, its main focus was still charitable works.[31]

At the second shift of mission focus toward Protestant Empire building, there were still many opportunities open for Mission Boards to expand Christianity, but direct evangelism from the main mission agencies was limited. The crisis of Christianity was interpreted differently by different traditions. From the fundamentalist, conservative and evangelistic point of view, the crisis was caused by liberals who "simply lacked enthusiasm for direct evangelism, whether

[30] Hutchison, Errand to the World, 8-14. Hutchison described the tensions among missionaries about evangelization and civilization as a no-win issue. Should one educate or evangelize? Missionaries were criticized for promoting individual salvation while neglecting the need for material and "social amelioration" or for promoting Western technology and ideology if they promoted social reform through education and social services.

[31] Leung, 134-35.

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at home or overseas."[32] Liberal Protestantism blamed revivalist Protestantism for its emphasis on individual salvation.[33] Evangelism remained a theme for the next two decades among missionary agencies and boards as China changed its attitude towards Western culture.

Paul A. Varg provided insights into the crisis of the home-based missionary agencies, while China gave equal welcome to Christianity along with other revolutionary programs. Within the home-based missionary crusade, a debate raged on the place of doctrine and scientific method in religion. Two stumbling blocks within home churches created apathy in the missionary enterprise. First, was a decline of interest in the church to Christianize heathen lands. Second, was "the re-orientation of the missionary program to the Christian humanism of postwar liberal theology."[34] This crisis impacted the number of students responding to the call to become missionaries. According to Kenneth Scott Latourette's report in 1926, missionaries were less than half the number of six years earlier.[35] This implicit crisis in the West was awakening China for the second era of its Nationalist Movement.

Soon, the opportunities for Christianity shifted to crisis, and China's

[32] Hutchison, Errand to the World, 103.

[33] Hutchison, Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism, 165.

[34] Varg, 147.

[35] Kenneth Scott Latourette, "What Is Happening to Mission?" Yale Review, Sept. 1928, 76-7. In 1920, 2,783 had signed the student volunteer pledge; in 1925 the number dropped sharply to 764 and in 1928 to 252. See Charles H. Fahs, "Recruiting and Selecting New Missionaries," Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry Fact-Finders' Reports, ed. Orville A. Petty, Vol. 7(New York: Harper & Bros., 1932), 17; also Varg, 148. In 1932 the Student Volunteer Convention attracted only 2,500 student delegates compared to 5,428 in 1920 and 4,526 in 1924.

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focus was shifted from cultural reform to political reform. In the process of westernization, China received ideas from the West -- science, secularism, atheism and liberalism -- which eventually became the platform for the anti-Christian movement in China. According to Leung's analysis, the May Fourth movement started as cultural reform. However, when Western empires supported the Japanese invasion of Manchus in 1919, Chinese students and radical intellectuals were very dissatisfied with the militarism of the warlords as well as Western Imperialism. Leung points out that Christianity lost its function as an agent to save China, and anti-imperialism became the only way to save China.[36] Nationalism was beginning to penetrate Chinese hearts and was displayed most clearly in the anti-Christian movement. Once again, Christianity faced a crisis.

1922-1927: Anti-Christian Movement.

The next era can be studied in two time periods, as laid out by Leung Ka-Lun: 1922 and 1924-1927.[37] The first period was caused by two specific events, and during the second period, the nationalist movement in China played a major role.[38] As mentioned earlier, China lost hope in modernist Christianity as the means to save China. Chinese Scholar N. Z. Zia highlighted the three main ideas behind the anti-Christian movement: anti-imperialism, science as opposed to religion, and the preservation and rebirth of Chinese civilization.[39] Emphasis

[36] Leung, 140.

[37] Leung, 142.

[38] Ibid., 142-147.

[39] N. Z. Zia, "The Anti-Christian Movement in China: A Bird's Eye View," in The China Mission Year Book, ed. Henry T. Hodgkin (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1925), 58.

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shifted back to the preservation and rebirth of Chinese culture. Thrown out were westernization and religion as means to cultural reform. The anti-Christian movement shifted to more political reform as Chinese intellectuals organized an anti-imperialism and anti-Christian nationalist movement.

Paul A. Varg named the sparks that caused the ideological fire in 1922 as: 1) the meeting in Peking of the World Christian Student Federation, at which time an anti-Christian alliance was created by Chinese intellectuals and radicals in major universities in China to combat the missionaries; and 2) the publication of a book by the China Continuation Committee with the unhappy title *The Christian Occupation of China*.[40] Leung indicated that the attack by Chinese radical intellectuals lasted only a short time, stopping within months.[41] A few Christian individuals countered in a well-drafted response to the anti-Christian antagonism which seemed to stop the attack. In Yang Sheng Fu's research, this declaration revealed the impurity in Christianity, the challenge for indigenous Christian leadership to emerge, and the three solutions offered to radical intellectuals which seemed to be influential in calming the storm. In my own translated words, the three solutions with which the Christian leadership countered the anti-Christian alliance read as:

> Our declaration is a response to the anti-Christian alliance challenge to religious entity. Now, we offer three solutions: One, let the pragmatism be tested; that is, let those who have religion or no religion in their own

[40] Varg., 181; H. C. Tsao, "The National Movement and Christian Education," in China Christian Year Book, ed. Frank Rawlinson (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1928), 174. Other national movements were the radical youth movement led by Chen Tu-hsiu, the New Literary Revolution led by Hu Shih around 1917-1922, and the May Fourth Patriotic Student Movement in 1919-1922.

[41] Leung, 144.

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> functions of daily life and society be the measure of truth. Even though this is an appropriate test, we are afraid that our friends may not have the patience to wait for the result. Second, we have to study closely with scientific facts about the significance of religion or Christianity. Perhaps our friends might not have the patience. Third, may we study together religious and non-religious truths that may contribute to our country, to academia and to our society.[42]

The above declaration shows the influence of Pragmatism on China. The chief measure of the value of religious truth was to be tested by its spiritual life and contribution to academia and society. In John Sung's diary, we can trace again the influence of pragmatism and how he set that as the priority in his thought, especially in his early awakenings. He wrote,

> I have studied extensively through History, Economics, Sociology; I do not think I am insane. I have changed my thoughts; Christ is my life; History is my teacher; Science is my tool. I am alive from the dead. To the world, I only have four "isms":1) Pragmatism, 2) God is Love-ism, 3) No self-ism, 4) World is empty to me-ism.[43]

Sung remarks at the beginning of his ministry that religious truth is to be tested by spiritual life and also science. This seems to coincide with the interest of current Chinese Christian leaders in spiritual life and science.

Despite the popularity of these ideas, Chinese people showed little patience with the pragmatism suggested by Chinese Christian leaders. H.C. Tsao along with Leung demonstrated between 1924-1927 that Narrow Nationalism and

[42] Yang Sheng Fu, 287-90. See also C. S. Chang, ed. The Last Ten Years of Religious Thought in China; and Peter Pang, The History of Christian Thought, 336-338. The declaration was published April 10, 1922. I translate the first solution more fully because it was the challenge of pragmatism that other Chinese Christian scholars including John Sung advocated.

[43] Sung, Diary, 25 [translation mine]. This quote is a literal translation of his words. This is the early thread of John Sung's thought. His theory and influences will be examined more thoroughly in the next chapter.

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Communism stirred up the second period of the anti-Christian movement. As a result of organized propaganda conducted through literature and lectures, many Christians, missionaries, church and mission schools came under attack during the May 30th affair of Shanghai.[44] As highlighted by T. C. Tsao, the Narrow Nationalist, which was called the "Awakening Lion" under the term "Cultural Invasion," fought for "Regaining Educational Rights." Communists objected to all religions on the same charge they brought against Christian educational institutions: that they were the "tools of imperialism" and "the running dogs of capitalism." The slogan, "Regaining Educational Rights," was extensively used to take over and destroy Christian schools.[45] Toward the end of the period, as interpreted by Taso and Leung, this anti-Christian movement became a nation-wide political revolution in which the government took educational rights back from mission schools. Mission Boards were forced to adopt new regulations, forbidding religious propaganda in mission schools.[46] By the close of this anti-Christian movement, it had created quite a challenge for missionaries and Chinese Christian leaders to defend Christianity.

N. Z. Zia's report highlights for us the anti-Christian movement, pointing out several marks which demonstrate the extent to which the movement penetrated Chinese Society and affected missionary agencies even more than the Boxer Uprising in 1900:

1) Scope: In 1900 the movement was limited to a few provinces, mainly in

[44] Ibid., 144-46; Tsao, 174-76.

[45] Tsao, 175-76.

[46] Leung., 145-53.

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> North China; now [this is a national movement that]has spread to practically all the large cities in the country. 2) Composition: The movement in 1900 brought in mainly loafers and country people; now educationalists [sic], leaders of thought and the majority of students are affected. 3) Motives: The movement of 1900 was largely inspired by superstition and led by unthinking religious reactionaries; now the new spirit of nationalism and the scientific spirit are the most important factors. 4) Method: In 1900 it was largely a question of mob psychology and fear; now the movement is one of searching inquiry and logical analysis. 5) Expression: In 1900, the expression took the form of physical force; now the means chiefly relied upon are propaganda through literature, lectures, etc.[47]

From the above comparison, it is obvious that antagonism toward Christians was more widespread and more influential in anti-Christian movement than the Boxer Uprising. Zia described three reasons that the later movement permeated Chinese society more so than the Boxer Uprising. First, he used charged language to highlight that the later movement was led by intellectuals and not by what he called "superstitious" farmers and "loafers," as was the Boxer uprising. Second, he claimed the later movement was guided by "scientific spirit, logical analysis," and strategic plans; whereas the Boxer uprising exploded from "mob psychology and fear." Third, it used more effective propaganda to spread the anti-Christian movement, such as literature and lectures, rather than physical force. As a result, he concluded, the consequences, too, were different. The Boxer Uprising opened up opportunities for mission schools to reform China. The anti-Christian movement restricted the mission schools and the Narrow Nationalist, mentioned above, encouraged the view of Christianity as a "cultural invasion," a "tool for imperialism," and eventually an obstacle for China political reform.

[47] Zia, 51.

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In analyzing the antagonism and restriction directed toward mission schools, Frank Rawlinson, editor of *The China Christian Year Book,* raised the question: "Why is it that the Christian dynamics were not fully reproduced in China in that era?" In order to assess the mission work up to that point, one hundred letters were sent to survey the problems faced by missionaries and Chinese pastors regarding their work of evangelism in that time period.[48] The letters generated only thirty-eight responses. One third of the responses came from members of the China Inland Mission. In terms of Chinese attitudes towards the Christian message, the returned letters reflected the confusion among Chinese Christians about the intent of Christianity in three areas:

> 1) The relation and attitude of Christianity to "imperialism." 2) The relation of nationalism to internationalism. 3) The relation of Christian ideas to China's religious and philosophical system.[49]

Rawlinson added, "most of the Chinese do not understand what Christianity is all about. The Chinese feel Christianity is impractical."[50]

In addition to these areas of confusion, the Chinese Christians, according to Rawlinson, were also unclear regarding its central emphasis--the spiritual life. Rawlinson concluded that one problem presently facing evangelism in China was that the Christian message was not understood either as to its content or its individual and social implications.[51]

[48] Frank Rawlison, "Special Problems of Evangelism," The China Christian Year Book (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1926), 117. The survey gathered topics such as: 1) the present Chinese attitude towards the "Christian message," 2) the evangelistic agent, 3) some emphases suggested, 4) some impressions, 5) outstanding needs.

[49] Ibid., 120.

[50] Ibid., 120

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Rawlinson concluded that this crisis was mainly due to a weakness in Chinese evangelistic leadership, caused by their lack of experience and spiritual power. It illustrated for him a divergence regarding the aim and scope of education. He felt preachers needed to be educated on a range of topics, from soul-winning qualities to meeting human needs.[52] I sympathize with Rawlinson, that the challenges were immense for a holistic approach to Christian education. Such an approach needed leaders, trained in soul-winning, prepared to shape Chinese religious experiences and ready to meet the crises in China.

How did Chinese leaders respond to the accusation of missionaries toward the Chinese Christian leadership? Ting Li Mei, a well-known evangelist in the 1920s, argued that the problem was not limited to Chinese Christian leaders, but was a spiritual problem within Mission Boards as well. According to Ting, the majority of the church members fell asleep, due to a lack of the First Love and Power.[53] More outspoken Chinese Christian leaders, such as T. Z. Koo, bluntly denounced the imperialism within Mission Boards. Koo told a conference in 1926 that the missionaries discouraged new lines of development when suggested by the Chinese, and instead imposed their own views.[54] These two illustrations were early signs of two different Chinese groups seeking resolution for spiritual renewal and indigenization.

[51] Ibid., 123.

[52] Ibid., 126.

[53] Ting Li Mei, "Some Problems of Evangelistic Work in the Church," The China Mission Year Book, ed. Frank Rawlinson (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1924), 205-08.

[54] Varg, 204.

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Daniel Bays observes that the Chinese awakenings in this era built up strong anti-imperialist forces, which changed the political landscape, and later forced missionary agencies to refocus their mission. In his words, he describes the situation of the missionaries and Chinese Christians:

> By 1927 new, strongly anti-imperialist forces (the Chinese Communist and Guomindang parties) were changing the political landscape of China. Foreigners, including missionaries, were alarmed and most fled for their lives in the spring of 1927, temporarily abandoning their stations; Chinese Christian leaders were bewildered, isolated and resentful at their own inevitable association with foreign "imperialism" in the eyes of radical students and political activists; common Chinese Christians were demoralized, many becoming less visible or altogether inactive.[55]

From this description, the apparent disaster for the Christian movement in China had forced a significant shift in its mission orientation. In addition to the input from the Rawlinson report on problems of evangelism in China, Bays points out that the Chinese church made a shift from the student/mission school base, as emphasized by Ding, Mott, and Eddy, back to a church-based community.[56]

Despite the anti-Christian crisis, Bays notes three other signs of revivalism that attracted Chinese students and common folks in both urban and rural areas. First, an outbreak of revivals came through dramatic public teaching and revival meetings.[57] Second, "[t]here was also a distinct new ingredient of Holiness/ Pentecostal stress on the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, --and a general high stress on the importance of revivalism across the board in the

[55] Bays, "Christian Revival in China," 168.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

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fundamental/evangelical sector."[58] Third, Bay highlights "a new generation of independent Chinese Christian leaders and organizations." John Sung and other Chinese revivalists, as Bays pointed out, started their revivals at the end of anti-Christian movement.[59] From Bay's document, the crisis of the anti-Christian movement challenged Christians to develop possibilities for Chinese Christians. One was the rise of indigenous Christian leadership; another was an outbreak of revivals throughout China.

1927-1937: Indigenization Response and Its Movements

The years 1927-1937 were considered the second golden age of church development in China. Well-known Chinese Christian Scholar, Chen Jin Yi claimed that the anti-Christian movement created a major shift of opportunities for indigenous and unity effort leadership.[60] He maintained that, since the shift to Church based community, Chinese churches refocused on social services and religious education to deepen the spiritual lives of Chinese. These two were seen as parallel and equally important goals.[61] And finally this shift represents a more thoroughly evangelical reform than at any other period of the early twentieth century.

Leung Ka-Lun's observation regarding the resolutions and change of focus on Chinese Christian churches is even more comprehensive. Five

[58] Ibid., 169.

[59] Ibid., 169-73. John Sung's ministry was from 1927 to 1944.

[60] Jingyi Cheng, "A Bird's Eye View of National Christian Movement in These Last Two Years," [In Chinese], in Chung Hua Chi-tu Chiao Hui Ninenchien (Hong Kong: China Churches Research Center, 1931), 2-3[translation mine].

[61] Ibid., 3-4.

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approaches are listed. First is Church Unity, involving two unity movements. One was the unity among denominations, which resulted in the formation of "Chung Hua Chi-tu Chiao Hui"(The Chinese Christian Church) in 1927 as the main Protestant denomination in China. The full unity was not actually effected before the closing of China in 1949.[62] The other movement was unity in ministry, resulting in the formation of the Christian Church Council in 1922. Leung commented that it was an easier task to be united in ministry than in denominations; hence Chinese churches set up models of cooperative leadership.[63] The second approach was to create Independent and Self Support Churches. As pointed out by Leung, this approach was stirred not only by the anti-Christian movement, but also by the decline of home base churches in mission.[64] The third approach was to build Chinese indigenous leadership. Within both the mission churches and the independent churches, Chinese Christian indigenous leaders sought to eliminate what they took to be unnecessary accretions from the West into the life style of the church. They left their indelible mark on the Church in China, and Chinese revivalists were the dominant forces in this indigenous movement.[65] The fourth approach was indigenization. According to Leung, primary research was done on indigenization to initiate a better

[62] Leung, 159-60. Leung commented that the organization was not as simple and successful as reported by the Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry's report.

[63] Ibid., 160. This model still exists today in the Christian Church Council and within Christian organizations.

[64] Ibid., 161-64..

[65] Ibid., 164-65.

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relationship between Christianity and Chinese culture, and to encourage the emergence of Chinese indigenous leadership and Chinese theology.[66] The fifth approach was contextualization, a process whereby the church critically reflected on how to respond to the presence of non-Chinese theology and Western culture within the Chinese context; in particular, how to implement the Western social gospel into the China context. Leung notes that "twentieth century Christians had made a shift in understanding Christianity as cultural oriented to social oriented;" and reflected on the concrete contributions of Christianity to the larger society and to addressing its problems.[67] They were spurred by the belief that Christianity could transform society into a near-perfect community. Christianity had moved from believing that Christianity's impact on society would be slow and indirect to considering concrete ways it could transform society's future. Leung realized that the Chinese social gospel was not as optimistic as the Western social gospel, which taught that heaven could be attained on earth. Instead, Chinese contextualization focused more on a kind of social reconstruction and reform that was more closely aligned with real Chinese needs and more clearly reflected the values and attitudes of the Chinese people.[68] Rawlinson, too, identified this trend toward social reconstruction as more appropriate to Chinese Christianity.[69]

What Leung describes as contextualization is seen in Chinese

[66] Ibid., 165-66.

[67] Ibid., 167.

[68] Ibid., 167-71.

[69] Frank Rawlinson, "Trends among Chinese Protestants," in The China Christian Year Book (Shanghai: Christian Society, 1934), 87.

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Christianity's focus on two main directions for change. One change affects the institutional level on which China sought to be self-supporting and independent from Western dominance with a greater degree of indigenous leadership. Another change involved the theological/cultural encounter. China sought interpretations of Christian faith that were culturally sensitive to and reflective of other theological influences on Chinese Christianity. Ruy O. Costa points out that the difference between indigenization and contextualization is reflected in the debates "on consciousness of the power struggles between missionaries and national leaders in the indigenization process"; and on active "conscientization about power struggles in the world" and dialogue with "interdisciplinary reflection."[70] The goal of contextualization is for the Chinese church to articulate a Christian theology that reflects a culturally true encounter of the Chinese people with the Holy Spirit and which can be integrated into the practice of Christianity in China.

Meanwhile, the home-based churches were evaluating their mission theory and work. The result, printed in the Layman's Inquiry report, created more crises than resolution. Paul A. Varg demonstrated extensively how the Laymen's inquiry report on rethinking mission became the watermark of Protestant liberalism. Archibald Baker of the University of Chicago explained that the report serves as a "signal event in the modern history of Christian missions," and Hutchison stated that the report "divided fundamentalist from liberal and

[70] Ruy O.Costa, ed., One Faith, Many Cultures: Inculturation, Indigenization, and Contextualization (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988), ix-xvii. More highlights on the differences and more methodological puzzles and dilemmas within these processes are in his editorial notes. Costa demonstrates that the whole debates relied on the consciousness of the church in participation with leadership, discussion, and reflection of the theological, cultural and institutional encounter.

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moderate."[71] The two claims in the report revealed liberalism's influence on the home based Mission Boards. According to Varg:

> 1) The old conflict with science was now replaced by a mature understanding of the necessity for a free religion and a free science to search for a complete world view.
> 2) Now missionaries must recognize that [Christianity] had no special claim to revelation and should join hands with the society for the purpose of strengthening spiritual values in a world threatened by materialism.[72]

This report created great criticism among home-based churches in the West about humanitarian work.[73] According to Hutchinson research through Baker's analysis, this report was a landmark of the direction of the Mission Board toward "social emphasis" and "showed too little conviction of the uniqueness of the revelation of Christ."[74] Varg noted that the *Missionary Review* "was critical about the report but published response articles on both sides from missionaries, Mission Boards, ministers and laymen." He added that only "the Congregational and Methodist Boards received the report favorably."[75] Varg indicated that the editor of *Chinese Recorder,* Frank Rawlinson, "would not publish letters which indulged in negative criticism of the report."[76] Frank Rawlinson's handling of the negative criticism revealed that the *Chinese Recorder,* unlike the *Missionary Review*, published articles that were more reflective of progressive Christianity

[71] Hutchison, Errand to the World, 165; and Archibald G. Baker, "Reactions to the Laymen's Report," Journal of Religion (October 1933): 392-98.

[72] Varg, 167.

[73] Varg, 170.

[74]Hutchison, Errand to the World, 164-65; Baker, 385.

[75] Varg, 170.

[76] Ibid., 170, n. 10.

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and liberal theology. Based on the diverse responses, one can see the split between the two Missionary Journals, between those who believed Christianity to be the only true religion and those who disagreed with that position.

This dispute demonstrates two opposing trends in mission theory to preach religion. The conservative approach is to believe that Christianity is the only true religion. Another approach is to believe that Christianity is only one among many valid religions, an approach often associated with progressive Christianity. The latter is also frequently associated with the social gospel, progressive education, and liberal theology. The question arises whether Christianity has a special claim on revelation. Responses to the Layman report revealed that there was a divergence of belief among missionaries and within Chinese churches.

Leung along with Rawlinson confirmed that there were two trends at the end of this era: one was led by revivalists who focused on winning souls without any marks of modernity. The other was led by groups of liberal Chinese and missionaries who were concerned with modernization and the preaching of the social gospel. The unique challenge of the divergent pulls on indigenization and spiritual life was for China to preach/teach religion in its own way, free of dominion by Western traditions. These two divergent trends were part of the heritage of John Sung, and they still exist today. China's response to the challenge encouraged the emergence of indigenous religious leadership and the forms of religion that flowed from the spirit of the people. A fuller understanding of the different movements and responses to Christianity can be achieved through studying the work of the Holy Spirit in China. Although one can never fully

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know God's Spirit, the work of the Holy Spirit can be partially discerned, by exploring the spiritual experiences of Chinese people and the Christian revivals in China.

Work of the Holy Spirit in Christian Revivals in China

Chinese church history, as noted above, was full of dangers and possibilities for Christianity. The study of historical movements demonstrates the contribution of progressive Christianity to China, including progressive Christianity's influence on cultural, political, and religious reforms, especially through mission schools. However, Chinese church history will not be accurate and complete without the study of Christian revivals in China, especially in this period of 1900-1937. The second part of this chapter attempts to show the contributions of Christian revivals, led by the Holiness Movement and indigenous Chinese Christian leadership. From studying the spiritual experiences of Chinese people and their theological interpretation of the Holy Spirit's work in revivals, I hope to discern what spiritual experiences shaped John Sung and Christianity in China. The intention is to fill the gap left by missionary reports that have overlooked the contributions of revivals to Chinese Church history.

In order to trace the Chinese experience of the Holy Spirit, the study of the Christian revivals in China will be the beginning point. I begin by asking such questions: Why are there so few studies of revivals in the Chinese Church history? When did Christian revivals begin in China? In what contexts did the Christian revivals occur? Who offered leadership in those revivals? What were the features of a Christian revival experience?

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First, why are there so few studies of revivals in the Chinese Church history? In my research on this matter, I discovered at least three reasons. One obvious reason is the prohibition of religious activities after 1949, including the study of religion in general. Second is the fact that even today the spread of Christianity is a sensitive issue and, because house churches are still experiencing signs of revival, many are still at risk for their enthusiasm. As a result, not many Chinese historians speak directly to the matter of revivals. Third, is the fact that most missionaries' reports, which were in favor of progressive Christianity, have not looked into the positive impact of the revival movement.

In my research I have found only two articles in the missionary journal that spoke directly about revivals in China. They were published in 1910 and 1931 in the missionary journal, *The China Mission Year Book.* The latter article by Frank Rawlinson indirectly and negatively acknowledged the "old-fashioned revivals in South Shantung."[77] On the other hand, quite a few articles on revivals were published in Chinese Journals such as *Chung Hua Chitu Chiao Hui NienChien* (The Chinese Christian church year book) and numerous other Chinese resources. According to these resources, John Sung was only one of the model revivalists in Chinese church history.[78] Last, as lifted up by a Chinese seminary president, M. Leekung Yu, the five-year evangelistic movement was credited to

[77] William N. Brewster, "Revivals," in The China Mission Year Book, ed, Donald MacGillivray (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society for China, 1910); Frank Rawlinson, "Present Day Envan-gelism," in The China Christian Year Book (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1931), 111.

[78] In Chung Hua Chitu Chiao Hui Nien Chien from 1930 onwards, there were many revivals mentioned under the category of evangelism. John Sung was the most outstanding revivalist mentioned out of ten. In Daniel Bays' "Christian Revivals in China," and "Growth of Independent Christianity in China."

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the heroism of foreign missionaries. Left out in the reports was the actual participation of many Chinese evangelists, whose activities were seen by Chinese Christians as signs of the Holy Spirit reviving China.[79] The point is that missionary reports neglected the contributions of Christian revivals, as well as the indigenous Chinese Christian leadership in the evangelistic movement.

In order to have open-minded discernment about the work of the Holy Spirit in revivals and to better understand the Christian revivals in China in comparison with Western Christian revivals, one has to re-examine and revisit the definition of revivalism. Is it the export of a particular cultural phenomenon or could it be considered transcultural with its uniqueness transplanted as seeds in other contexts? Stuart C. Henry defines 'revivalism' this way:

> Revivalism ... is a distinctly American phenomenon, dating from the mid-eighteenth century and relating to one or a series of services, often highly emotional, designed to stimulate renewed interest in religion.[80]

According to Stuart C. Henry, revivalism was an emotional phenomenon used to renew interest in religion, and he saw it as an American phenomenon. In his article, he named the revival models as Finney-style or Moody-style, and he traced strong connections with Holiness and Pentecostal revivals. Despite variations in the development of American revivalism, Henry identified much in American revivals that people thought revivals could be repeated. He notes,

[79] M. Lee Kung Yu, From Dark to Dawn: Yu Lee Kung's View of Gospel Outbreak in China [in Chinese] (Taiwan: Chinese Christian Literacy Mission Corporation, 1998), 2 [translation mine].

[80] Stuart C. Henry, "Revivalism," in Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience, eds. Charles H. Lippy and Peter W. Williams (New York: Scribners, 1988), 2:799.

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> After Finney, American revivalism was oriented not to the inscrutable will of God but to human effort which, if fervent and faithful, would surely achieve salvation.[81]

Here Henry identified a strong trend within American revivalism for people to believe that human good intention and effort alone were sufficient for salvation.

Henry's discussion raises questions about the relation between American and Chinese revival experiences. Was revivalism in China merely a transplant of American revivalism? After claiming that Chinese revivals were similar to the American and British revival tradition from the late nineteenth to twentieth centuries, Daniel Bays raises the question "whether the North-Atlantic model of revivalism was a universal one, or Christian revivals are part of a broader, transcultural human religious phenomenon, which expresses itself naturally in China."[82] To this question is added a second, namely: What is the role of people in promoting revivals? In regard to China, further questions are also raised: Who promoted the revivals and how were they unique in China?

As to the question about universality and uniqueness, the Chinese Christian revival movement exemplified some of the universal characteristics of Christian revivals; yet it had the ability to create a unique Chinese Christianity. In fact, since the first Pentecost, revivals have never ceased in Christian history, and have been repeated in different parts of the world. In this section, I will trace the revivalism events in China from 1900-1937. What was unique about the revivals in China was the strength of the indigenous leadership and an insurgence of

[81] Ibid., 2: 804.

[82] Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 175.

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evangelistic fervor that even spread overseas. I will examine the different features of Christian revivals where the Chinese were drawn into deeper spiritual renewal and then claimed the marks of the Holy Spirit.

When did Christian revivals begin in China? Though many individual Chinese conversions were recorded in the nineteenth century, revivals in China did not become visible until the turn of the twentieth century. As Bays notes, "until 1900 there certainly was no visible Chinese analogue to the revival movements led by Edwards, Whitefield, Finney, Moody, and others that had punctuated the American scene for over 150 years."[83] Chinese churches seemed hardly large enough to survive in the nineteenth century. As Kenneth S. Latourette, observes:

> The Chinese Protestant church was still so small and scattered that as late as the 1890s one might wonder if there was sufficient momentum to survive, let alone to revive; there were about 37,000 Protestants in 1889.[84]

By these accounts, Chinese churches were too weak and insignificant to sustain an American-style revival movement before the turn of the twentieth century.

In order for us to distinguish the context of the mission work, I make two observations. Those 37,000 Protestants that Latourette mentioned were primarily urban, and the number included missionaries. William Hutchison noted that the career missionaries numbered at least 14,000 in the 1920s, but later shrank "by several thousand during the early years of the Depression."[85] Mission work was

[83] Ibid., 161.

[84] Kenneth S. Latourette, A History of Christian Missions in China (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 479.

[85] Hutchison, Errand to the World, 176.

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focused mainly in the urban areas. The controversial book, *The Christian Occupation of China,* which stirred the anti-Christian movement, challenged the missionaries' neglect of rural areas. The book states,

> In 1922 only 6 percent of China's population lived in cities of over 50,000. Yet, 66 per cent of the missionaries, 34 per cent of the Chinese Workers, and 24 per cent of the church members resided in these urban centers. Only a third of China's 10,000 villages had some Christian work.[86]

This inequitable mission that focused on the six percent in the urban areas, to the neglect of two thirds of rural villages, aroused the Chinese anti-Christian movement in its attack on Christian missions.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier by Daniel Bays, while the main missionary agencies focused on mission schools and other urban institutions, individuals of the Holiness and revival traditions claimed that the Holy Spirit sent them to rural areas in China (other than the China Inland Mission). The Christian revivals made their way throughout China and were recorded primarily in rural areas. First, in 1908, was the Manchurian revival inspired by the Korean revival, as noted by Rev. J. Goforth.[87] Second, revivals were repeated in South China in 1908-1910, in Fukien, earlier in Amoy sections, and later in the Foo Chow, Hinghwa, Swatow sections of Kwangtung, and central China in Nanking.[88] Third, the Shantung and Chinese revivals were emerging from 1930-1949. These

[86] Milton F. Stauffer, ed., The Christian Occupation of China (Shanghai: China Continuation Committee, 1922), 385.

[87] Brewster, 314; Bays, "Christian Revival in China,"164.

[88] Brewster, 314-15 and also in Sung, 2-4. The Hinghwa revival as narrated by Sung, which he witnessed as a child, was in fact one of the seeds that planted in him faith in revivals and prepared him to expect revivals in China.

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revivals were mainly in rural areas, and spread to cities in the late `30s.[89] Paul A. Varg has noted that wrong or incomplete credit is given to the growth of church membership if rural membership is not reflected. In citing the survey done by Frank Price, twenty-five rural churches had a net gain of 42.5 per cent from 1932 to 1936.[90] He further described the movement in the rural areas as follows:

> ---the movement prospered and rural churches, many of them practically deserted, came to life. A Chinese evangelist, John Sung, won popularity by denouncing a paid ministry, denominational differences, and by stressing the Second Coming of Christ, the Resurrection, and the Judgment. In a trying period of war and of economic catastrophe, concentration on the future life provided an attractive escape from reality. At the meetings emotional energies occurred in which both the preacher and members of the congregation, delivering themselves from all conventional restraints, went into trances in which they claimed that the Holy Spirit was speaking through them. Another prominent feature of the revivals was faith healing. Stories circulated of remarkable cures.[91]

These records reveal to us several features of the Christian revivals. First, Christian revivals prospered in rural areas. Second, the apocalyptic message of Christ's Second Coming, the Resurrection, the Judgment, and the promise of a future life attracted Chinese people, because it gave them hope in the midst of war and catastrophe. Third, the revivals displayed high emotions, trances, and faith

[89] M. Lee Kung Yu. Yu recorded the Shantung revival, indigenous Chinese revivalists like John Sung, Andrew Gih, Watchman Nee and the revivals through The Evangelical Crusade during the Civil War period in China. Also see Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937"; and " Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 1900-1937." See also Mary Crawford, The Shantung Revival (Shanghai: China Baptist Publication Society, 1933); Marie Monsen, The Awakening: Revival in China, a Work of the Holy Spirit, trans. Joy Guiness (London: China Inland Mission, 1961); also C. L. Culpepper, The Shantung Revival (Dallas: Baptist General Convention of Texas, 1968).

[90] Varg, 259; Frank W. Price, The Rural Church in China (New York: Agricultural Missions, 1948), 106.

[91] Varg, 229-230.

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healing. Fourth, both the revivalists and Chinese people saw the movement as the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, we can conclude historically that Chinese revivals were held mainly in rural areas, and that the Chinese claimed that it was the Holy Spirit who shifted the mission focus from the schools back to the churches. They claimed that the Spirit set the fires of revival in various rural areas, even though rural areas were not a priority in the master plan of the missionary agencies.

There were other features of China revivals, which were culturally evident but not included, in the missionary report. First, there were many indigenous Chinese revivalists. Chinese historians, including the principal of a Chinese seminary, M. Leekung Yu, growing up during Shangtung's revival era, listed quite a few revivalists such as Ding Limei, Wang Mingdao, Ni Duosheng (Watchman Nee), Wang Zai, Bethel Bands of the Bethel Mission, Andrew Gih, and Song Shangjie (John Sung).[92] Except Wang Mingdao and Ding Limei who spread evangelization mainly in China, all of the above leaders spread evangelization also to Asia. Second, all of these revivalists preached about freeing Chinese Christianity from Western cultural models and denominations, yet they were basically inseparable from the denomination relations and support. There were two modes of churches that viewed indigenization differently from each other. One sought to form a more Chinese style of worship, such as led by Watchman Nee, who disassociated from denominations. Other revivalists worked closely with the existing denominational structure and worked together to form

[92] Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 165-73; and also C. C. Pao "The Report of Church Ministry,"Chung Hua Chi-tu Chiao Hui NienChien [in Chinese] (1931; reprint, Hong Kong: China Churches Research Center, 1983), 63-64; and also M. Lee kung Yu.

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Chung Hua Chi-tu Chiao Hui (China Christian Church) and to organize autonomous evangelism with Chinese Christian leaders. However, anti-formal and anti-denominational sentiments were common to both of them. Later, I will demonstrate that John Sung's free and spontaneous worship in revivals is a typical example of how the indigenous Chinese church worked with denominations in revivals, yet remained critical toward the denominational approach to mission and the liberal missionaries' lack of experience of revivals.

Not all revivalists intended to work closely with denominations. As criticized by Bays, an independent Chinese church such as the True Jesus Church of the Pentecostal tradition, which was formed in 1917-1919, is "radically sectarian." Bay further explained that this True Jesus Church was basically "Pentecostal in belief and practice, militantly anti-foreign in stance."[93] It was (and still is) often in conflict with the foreign missions and functioned as an exclusive and closed sect. Bay's critique is that, due to its exclusivism, the True Jesus Church did not permit revivalism to have as wide or ecumenical an impact as did other evangelistic movements. Even so, its proselytizing effects were widely felt and were often resented by mission churches.[94] Though we know little of this tradition, the True Jesus Church revivals were anti-formal, anti-denominational and anti-foreign. In Sung's work, he spoke negatively of their tongue speaking, as I will present later.

Another feature of China Christian revivals was the creation of many lay

[93] Bays, "Chinese Revival in Chinese," 170.

[94] Ibid.

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missionaries or lay movements that included women and students who formed bands for training in evangelism. They developed multiple means of evangelism, including preaching in the market place, prisons, and rural villages and laying hands on the sick.[95] This renewed interest in religion was not just about individuals being converted. Rather it was about the whole church community's renewed interest in Christianity and in the missions. Most visible were the remarkable changes of attitude in young people. Parallel to the young men's movement in the nation, the Student Volunteer Band from 1910, and later the Chinese Native Evangelical Crusade in the late '30s, was enthusiastic about saving China through saving souls of individuals.[96]

The last important feature of the Chinese Christian revival had to do with leadership and methods of revival. Using resources from the missionaries, Bay describes John Sung's style of leadership as a "unique, abrasive style of forceful or 'rude' revivalism"; yet he was a "creative Bible expositor and good song leader." He created a dramatic stir of Chinese passions for mission and spiritual life in whatever community he went. Bays concluded,

> Sung must be reckoned probably the single most powerful figure in Chinese revivalism in the mid-1930s. Although eventually barred by some churches, he was highly esteemed by many others.[97]

[95] Ibid., These resources do not use the term "lay movement"; however, all people of various ages and backgrounds were on fire for God. I did not understand this phenomena until I revisited my grandmother's tradition. She, being illiterate, was an ordinary mid-wife. However, she was recognized as the band member or lay revivalist where she regularly preached in the market and laid hands on the sick. I did not realize it was such a phenomenon in her era. She was filled with confidence and power which I can only attribute to the Holy Spirit.

[96] Brewster, 316-17; and M. Leekung Yu, 215-42.

[97] Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 173.

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Bays' remarks reflect Sung's contradictory leadership styles. His leadership style was welcomed by Chinese but barred by some missionaries. As a "rude revivalism," it stirred Chinese passions for mission and spiritual life.

In addition to Sung's "rude revivalism," M. LeeKung Yu confirmed that his revival meetings were heated to the point of being "fanatic." Neither pastors nor missionaries could follow his style of leadership; yet he was the role model for Chinese young people of the era.[98] Chinese leaders, including John Sung's daughter, claimed that his style was uniquely the work of the Holy Spirit.[99] Faith healing was another of Sung's revival features, as mentioned earlier by Paul Varg.

In comparison with Sung's revival, the Shangtung revivals were quieter with fervent prayers, "holy laughter and praise," all night meetings, "the Holy Spirit moving as an audible wind," involuntary sounds in prayer, as well as many miraculous healings.[100] M. LeeKung Yu, who witnessed both revivals, highlighted the prayer enthusiasm in Shangtung. Despite differences, the common phenomenon between the Sung and Shangtung were the three changes that experienced among the participants: 1) voluntary and concrete confession and repentance of sins; 2) experience of being filled and changed by the Holy Spirit; 3) experience of passionate evangelism, motivating many young people to crusade for Christ throughout China and into Asia.[101]

[98] M. LeeKung Yu, 180, 130.

[99] From my interview with John Sung's daughter, Levi, she affirmed with me that her father and the Chinese all claimed that the Chinese Christian revivals in China, especially her father's ministry, was the work of the Holy Spirit.

[100] Ibid., Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 173.

[101] M. Lee Kung Yu, 289-90.

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Both of these styles of revival have parallels in other contexts as well, which are also similar to American revivalism. M. LeeKung Yu commented that these revivals were very similar to the Wesleyan Holiness Movement, where the experiences of sanctification or holiness had an impact on social life and society.[102] Yu further suggests that, while the revivals in the eighteenth century prevented England from following the French revolution, the Chinese Christian revivals in the early twentieth century prepared China in facing its upcoming ordeals and revolutions.[103] Reflecting theologically, the work of the Spirit not only planted seeds for spiritual awakening to God, but it built vivid relationships with Jesus who had been so foreign to them in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, Christianity became more personal for the Chinese, strong enough for the church to face the upcoming storms and dark nights.

All of the above illustrates that Chinese Christian revivals were as much a part of Chinese church history as mainline Protestant missionary Christianity. It is in the context of this movement that John Sung began his Christian revivals and many Chinese churches renewed their interest in religion. Both the contributions of the progressive Christianity and Chinese Christian revivals needed to be interpreted with equal lights. Hopefully, by tracing these traditions, we can discover good soil for interpreting the Spirit's work in the church and in a global Christian context.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid., 290-291 and 182.

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Conclusions

From the above study of Chinese Christian revivals, we can conclude that the movements of Christianity in China, including Christian revivals, played major roles in shaping Chinese churches in the early twentieth century. China in the early twentieth century was not only full of dangers but also possibilities for Christianity. There were many human errors that misrepresented Christianity as imperialism, capitalism, science, and westernization. The Chinese government and people were in constant conflict whether to welcome Christianity as a means to save China or as a partner for reform. History will be the best judge for Christianity's contribution to China. It was in this context, this political, cultural, and religious turmoil that John Sung and Chinese Christianity took root.

The study of Chinese church history is incomplete without the inclusion of Christian revivals. It is from this movement that Chinese Christians claim their experience of the work of the Holy Spirit and the rise of an indigenous Christian leadership. Daniel Bays affirms that "revivalism is a handy and effective means for indigenous Christian leaders to break free of domination by missions."[104]

Christian revivals brought balance to what Christian missions left out. First, most Christian revivals occurred in rural areas, thus reaching out to the greater population and addressing the anti-Christian criticism that Christian missions centered exclusively on the cities. Second, the anti-Christian movement challenged an indigenous Chinese Christian leadership to emerge from 1927

[104] Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 175.

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onwards. Third, revivals contributed to deepening convictions of faith with a close experience of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Fourth, many young Christians felt themselves to be sent by the Holy Spirit to evangelize in Asia, as were John Sung and the Chinese Native Evangelical Crusade. Fifth, this strong conviction of the experience and work of the Holy Spirit on China soil, including the rise of the house churches, was identified by M. LeeKung Yu as experience that "prepared China in the facing of its upcoming ordeals and revolutions."[105]

The time is ripe now to reconsider the work of the Holy Spirit within its historical, cultural, and practical contexts, and to consider these insights in our teaching. Chinese spiritual experience was rooted in a complicated context and arose from a deep need in people to relate Christ and the Holy Spirit to their lives. After China closed itself to the West in 1949, American international policies that were intended to resolve crises did nothing to help. For many of the people of China, it was the experience of the Holy Spirit, introduced through religious revivals, which led them through the stormy years of darkness.

In the next chapter, we will trace more specifically how Western Christian religious educational theory failed to reflect the work of the Spirit, in part because it neglected revivals. Having struggled in this neglect, Western Christianity is now looking for ways to account for this important work of the Spirit in its practices.

[105] M. Lee Kung Yu, 289-90.

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CHAPTER 3

Experiences and Reactions: The Holy Spirit in United States in the Early Twentieth Century

In this chapter, I use the United States debate over the paradigms of conversion and nurture as a strong indicator of the ways religious theorists have neglected the place of Holy Spirit in Christian religious education. This debate illumines the tendency, in one period of North American religious education, to set one tradition of theology and educational theory over against another, rather than to demonstrate how embracing both traditions might hold contributions for particular contexts. This tendency had focused more on other theological and educational constructs than on integrating the experience of the Holy Spirit in educational theory. Moreover, this study also reveals that the debate took place in a particular moment of history when both revivalism and liberalism were being questioned. Finally, in a dualistic debate such as this one, people miss the centrality of the Holy Spirit for Christian religious education theory, and thus miss the Spirit's teaching.

The second part of this chapter draws from some of the most recent works on the Holy Spirit in Christian religious education theory, indicating that Christian religious education theory is re-centering on the work of the Holy Spirit. After introducing this work, I hope to conclude with what we proposed in Chapter 2, that Christian religious education theory has yet to learn from its past and to incorporate the religious experience of the Holy Spirit in theory and practice. A

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theory of Christian religious education that does take account of movements and experiences of the Holy Spirit will provide a much-needed environment for people to experience God and grow in wholeness.

Nurture versus Conversion Debate in the United States

One important historical reaction against the practice of revivals in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is the nurture versus conversion debate. This reaction was first articulated in Horace Bushnell's controversial book, *Christian Nurture* (1847), in which he argued strongly for nurture over against conversion. The debate reached its climax with the 1940 publication of a book by Harrison Elliott, who championed religious education undergirded by the liberal theology of his day, and the 1941 response by H. Shelton Smith, who espoused neo-orthodox education. The debate reveals the tension between contemporary experience and historical traditions, between immanent and transcendent understandings of God, and between a rationalistic analysis and a supernaturalistic experience of religion. Most of all, the debate shows that American Protestantism, including the neo-orthodox tradition, preferred an intellectual explanation of religion, rather than integrating the experience of revivalism into religious theory.

In the concept of conversion held in the American revival movement, the person in need of salvation needed to repent in order for regeneration to happen. This emphasis on conversion as a pre-requisite for salvation and Christian growth was criticized and rejected by liberal scholars near the end of the nineteenth

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century. Interestingly, the idea that conversion can have a significant role in Christian development re-emerged later, largely because it was a persistent form of religious experience. At the same time, neo-orthodox scholars in the mid-twentieth century criticized the liberal nurture paradigm as being experience-centered rather than Christ-centered. Ultimately this debate revolved on whether Christian religious education should be focused on experiential education, should be Christ-centered, or should focus primarily on biblical traditions.

Some of the formative figures of religious education in the United States were Horace Bushnell, John Dewey, George Albert Coe; later figures of the mid-twentieth century were Harrison Elliott and H. Shelton Smith. Many theories, excepting H. Shelton Smith, were built upon the liberal theology of this time. In the following discussion of major figures who advocated a neo-orthodox paradigm (Smith), or who developed a liberal paradigm (Bushnell, Coe, Elliott), I will do no more than highlight some of the major ideas.

Horace Bushnell, in his book *Christian Nurture (1847),* made a theological argument for a nurture paradigm over the conversion paradigm.[1] He questioned the lack of educational constructs in the church. He believed that the goal of religious instruction was not to show children their lost condition and prepare them for conversion when they reached the age of accountability. He strongly opposed the orthodox teaching of depraved human nature. He particularly opposed the revival methods of withholding the nurture of Christian life until adulthood and regarding children as sinners, vessels of wrath and the

[1] Horace Bushnell, Christian Nurture (New York: Charles Scribner, 1861).

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like. This emphasis, he said, would evoke only morbidity, emotional stress and strain, and obstruct healthy growth in Christian character. He criticized the church for having no philosophy of children. In contrast, he boldly asserted that children are capable of religious experience the moment they are born.[2] He argued, "The Child is to grow up a Christian, and never know himself as being otherwise."[3] He believed that children, by nature, are already in possession of a life principle that requires not repentance, but spiritual development. He criticized education which brings up children to see themselves in need of future conversion, naming it "ostrich nurture," and identified it as "unchristian."[4]

Bushnell described three modes of ostrich nurture, each implying that Christ is for adults only. For the purpose of clarification, I describe them as follows: 1) free-style education, a belief that children will correct themselves and be led to self-enlightenment by their discoveries without the need for social correction;[5] 2) revival education, waiting for heavenly spirits to amend their defects;[6] and 3) adult church education, where children have no place in the church and teachings are not modified to suit the conditions of their age.[7]

[2] Ibid., vii-xxx, 1-64.

[3] Ibid., 10.

[4] Ibid., 65-89.

[5] Ibid., 66-77. Bushnell did not call this free-style education; he simply described this as a mode of ostrich nurture, assuming that, left to themselves, children will "grow up into the most genuine, highest style of human character"(67).

[6] Ibid., 77-81. In Bushnell's words, educators of this style"believed in what are called revivals of religion, and having a great opinion of them as being, in a very special sense, the converting times of gospel"(77).

[7] Ibid., 81-89.

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Bushnell believed that the church failed in its duty to nurture children when "parents are called by Christ to live within and children themselves are left without."[8] He criticized revivalism as defective, saying that it "makes nothing of the family, and the church, and the organic powers God had constituted as vehicles of grace."[9] Bushnell questioned the church's inadequacy of education, which focused mainly on adult education, and he criticized revival methods for sabotaging hope for children in the family when the church insisted on trusting solely in the grace of God for such nurture.

Bushnell maintained there was an organic unity within the family which participated in the Spirit and provided the spiritual character of the family. Within this nurturing environment, the child is capable of exercising will and choice. Bushnell reacted against revivalism's understanding of human nature and the conversion method, calling them unchristian and cruel.[10] He then rejected revivalism and the conversion method as it was practiced in the United States.

The influence of John Dewey's educational theories on the religious education movement (as well as on education in general) was immense. Dewey's contribution was a progressive education that placed contemporary experience at the center of learning. His theory was not overtly theological because Dewey was concerned with the religious spirit of education; he was little concerned with particular Christian beliefs or the church context of education.[11] Some of his

[8] Ibid., 82.

[9] Ibid., 187.

[10] Ibid., 16-18.

[11] John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1916).

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emphases were shared with Coe and Elliot: 1) learning by experience; 2) growth in and through social experience, recognizing education as a social process; and 3) education as democratic, which is not "dominated by either students or teachers but should be a situation of 'mutual accommodation and adaptation.'"[12] Dewey shared similar concerns with Bushnell on the first two emphases regarding learning through experience, especially social experience. However, for Bushnell, the context of education was more focused on church and family, whereas Dewey was focused on a wider context of human experiences and educational systems. All three of Dewey's emphases were shared with Coe, Elliott, and other progressive educators. Dewey's progressive view of education integrated learning by experience, the value of social experience, and the possibility of reconstructing experience in a democratic setting. This view served as a key component in shaping religious education theory.

George Albert Coe is another formative figure who rejected the conversion paradigm. Like Bushnell, Coe's work was overtly theological, dealing with the concept of conversion, especially his works on *Spiritual Life* (1900), *The Psychology of Religion* (1916), and his best known work, *A Social Theory of Religious Education* (1917).[13] More so than Bushnell, Coe saw education as a

[12] Ibid., 99, See also the chapters on "Education as a Social Action," "Education as Growth," and "The Democrative Conception in Education" in John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: Macmillan Publishing,1938), 58-60; and Mary-Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change: A New Model for Christian Religious Education (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 46. Moore offers a synopsis of the debate, as well as Dewey's contribution to progressive education (11-55).

[13] George A. Coe, The Spiritual Life: Studies in the Science of Religion (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1900); The Psychology of Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916); and A Social Theory of Religious Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917).

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social enterprise. The purpose of religious education was to change the social conditions of the world. His work is similar to Walter Rauschenbush's work on the social gospel, where he saw that Christianity is basically not "purely religious, but also a democratic and social movement;[14] and Dewey's philosophy that education is aimed at re-constructing society or experience.[15] Education occurs in the interaction between pupil and his/her natural and social environment. Coe is also similar to Dewey in envisioning a "democracy of God." Coe, in fact, understood this idea of democracy as essential to a full appreciation of Jesus' teaching.[16] Coe reflected the modernistic view of Christianity of his era, identified by William Hutchison, as having the characteristics of "human optimism, modernism's cultural hope and progressive cultural immanentism;" liberals held high hope to change the social conditions of the world.[17]

Like Bushnell, Coe opposed the conversion paradigm and rejected that emphasis of the church. He saw the revival method of "postponing the beginning of personal religion of a social sort till adolescence, relying on the chance that a conversion experience will reverse the Christian character later in adults" as a

[14] Walter Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 140; A Theology for the Social Gospel (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978); and For God and the People: Prayers of the Social Awakening (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1910). In the above three books, they offered Rauschenbusch's concern of giving gospel and religion the social consciousness and social expression.

[15] Dewey, Experience and Education, 47. Dewey believed, "In a certain sense every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality. That is the very meaning of growth, continuity, reconstruction of experience." For Dewey, the educational process involves growth, continuity, and reconstruction of experience.

[16] Coe, Social Theory of Religious Education, 54.

[17] Hutchison, Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism,11.

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fatal policy.[18] He observed that two streams of youth resulted from this revivalism, either without conversion or without taking any religious stand.[19] In his critique of the conversion experience, he attributed three sets of factors to the attainment of such experiences as: "the temperament factor, the factor of expectation, and the tendency to automatisms and passive suggestibility."[20] He concluded that the church should make conversion unnecessary. He resisted the practice of conversion because, in teaching a person that "to be a Christian, one must at some particular instant cross a line that separates the saved from the unsaved," which created separatism.[21] He especially opposed the promotion of a uniform religious experience to differentiate the ones who have received religion, thus encouraging a spiritual aristocracy.[22] He further concluded that this experience is practically inaccessible to young children, and is at best a distant thing for adolescent and even adult life.[23]

Coe further criticized conversion as an "uneducational evangelism," and as a personal religion that avoids social responsibility.[24] He also argued, as did Bushnell, that the family is the primary social context for experience and

[18] Ibid., 181.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Coe, Spiritual Life, 138.

[21] Coe, Social Theory of Religious Education, 325.

[22] Ibid., 326.

[23] Ibid., 326-27.

[24] Ibid., 181-82.

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growth.[25] He elaborated that children can share religion with adults and experience communion with God. He commented that, "in our living as brothers, in so doing we live a common life with the Father," described as the democracy of God.[26] In Coe's language, the nurture paradigm helps children "grow toward and into mature and sufficient devotion to the democracy of God and happy self-realization therein."[27]

In his nurture paradigm, Coe rejected the practice of a "decision day"; he proposed a "fellowship day." His argument was that a decision day failed to respect the principle of growth that he believed applies to every stage of a child's life.[28] He criticized the once-a-year call for a decision for Christ as being too little and, also, an interruption in the educational interaction process. Instead, in the "fellowship day," everyone could realize fellowship with one another, with Jesus, and with the common purpose of social reconciliation.[29] We recognize in Coe's argument a reaction against revivalism and conversion as a one-time event.

The mid-twentieth century figures who came to symbolize the debate were Harrison Elliot and H. Shelton Smith. By this time in the United States, the debate was less focused on conversion and revivalism. It was more focused on liberal and neo-orthodox theologies and their concomitant educational theories. In his book *Can Religious Education Be Christian*? (1940), Elliott tackled the

[25] Ibid., 207.

[26] Ibid., 327.

[27] Ibid., 55.

[28] Ibid., 331-32.

[29] Ibid., 332.

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theological question of whether we can speak of a single authoritative version of Christianity.[30] He raised the question of how revelation comes to be known, and he emphasized the possibility of nurture in the Christian life.[31] He especially reacted to a growing criticism of liberal educational methods. Neo-orthodox proponents argued that experience could not be the primary source of Christian theology. In order to be Christian, theology had to be revealed, and in their minds it had been revealed in the Christian Bible. At its heart, this debate is about the sources of theology and whether one version of Christianity can be held out as possessing greater authority than another version. The progressive emphasis pushed the issue of experience and its validity as a primary source for theology. Elliott argued that all previous efforts to maintain that there was one, single, most authoritative version of Christianity could not be desirable. He believed that if this theology is accepted, "it is not the direct reign of God but the authority of parents, teachers, ministers, and rulers which is identified as the will of God."[32]

In the particular concept of conversion, Elliott saw that children learn through experience and in a social context. He criticized the conversion experience for not producing the "complete transformation of the individual."[33] He argued that shifts are needed first in adult education. He insisted that "in religious education more attention must be given to adults in order for the

[30] Harrison S. Elliott. Can Religious Education be Christian? (1940; reprint, New York: Macmillan Co., 1953).

[31] Ibid., 115.

[32] Ibid., 153.

[33] Ibid., 224-25.

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children to have a different environment in which to grow up."[34] Second, he urged that the educational process be grounded in the family and church.[35] In Elliott's terms, "group experience" is the manifestation of the immanent God in this world and human history.[36] Elliott criticized the neo-orthodox interpreters for giving little or no weight to manifestations other than the final revelation of God in Jesus Christ through the Bible.[37] He also criticized the conversion model for its failure to help individuals face their human responsibility to reconstruct their lives in and through social experience. He claimed that "the contribution of the Christian religion to reverent human responsibility is not realized when the emphasis is limited to a sense of guilt for failure and seeking forgiveness for sin."[38] He concluded that what was needed was an "experience-centered and socially organized educational process" to foster positive contributions of Christian faith.[39]

Bushnell, Coe and Elliott all proposed an experience-centered and socially organized educational process in the nurture paradigm. All were very critical of conversion as a one-time event. Bushnell, Coe and Elliott affirmed children's capacity to experience the fullness of Christian faith. Further, their belief in the immanence of God and the ongoing spiritual growth of children suggests that

[34] Ibid., 226.

[35] Ibid., 229.

[36] Ibid., 293.

[37] Ibid., 132-33.

[38] Ibid., 320.

[39] Ibid.

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children are capable of experiencing the Holy Spirit throughout their lives.

H. Shelton Smith best exemplified the neo-orthodox strand of Christian education. In his book *Faith and Nurture* (1941),[40] Smith felt that liberal religious education paid inadequate attention to theology, and more attention to educational questions about nurture.[41] He believed liberals paid too much attention to the immanence of God, thereby falling into the trap of a this-worldly view of the kingdom of God.[42] Liberal theology seemed to him to be anthropocentric.[43] He criticized liberals for being too growth-oriented, failing to deal significantly with sin, guilt, and conversion. Smith also argued with what he viewed as the liberal view of the goodness of humanity. For him, such an assessment was far too optimistic.[44] In addition, he felt liberals emphasized too much the historical Jesus, reducing him to a great educator. Smith wanted to reclaim God's transcendence, conversion, a theocentric kingdom, and the Christ of faith.[45] In addition, he argued for a single, authoritative view of Christianity.[46] Thus, we can see that Smith believed the nurture view of Bushnell, Coe and Elliott, which emphasized experiential education and reduced Christ to a great educator, went against much of the Christian faith.

[40] Shelton H. Smith, Faith and Nurture (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941).

[41] Ibid., 105-07.

[42] Ibid., 116.

[43] Ibid., 17.

[44] Ibid., 126-27.

[45] Ibid., 405-06.

[46] Ibid., 406.

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On the one hand, Smith complimented the nurture paradigm by recognizing the child's capacity to respond to good and evil.[47] On the other hand, he believed it obscured the fact that children emerge in history as creatures in tension with the kingdom of God. Rejecting the conversion paradigm obscures the radical nature of repentance as a condition of participation.[48] Smith criticized Bushnell's emphasis on the psychological goodness and healthy growth in Christian character as representing a romantic sentiment of the liberal spirit.[49] At the same time, Smith agreed with Elliott, Bushnell and Coe, on the dangers of orthodoxy that would "exaggerate the sense of sin in human experience, and thereby produce an unhealthy morbidity."[50] Smith, however, believed that liberalism created a greater danger by making every child feel that all is sweet and nice within. Liberalism, Smith maintained, rejected the reality of sin, denied the sovereignty of God or God as transcendent, and reduced the kingdom of God to an anthropocentric kingdom and a particular social order.[51]

From the discussion, we can see that all of the above theorists, except Smith, rejected the conversion paradigm. These thinkers believed the revival method did not allow the possibility of nurturing Christian faith in children. They also rejected the notion of conversion as a one-time event. All of the theorists

[47] Ibid., 121.

[48] Ibid., 120-21.

[49] Ibid., 122.

[50] Ibid., 169-71.

[51] Ibid., 169-71.

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believed that children are capable of faith. Their disagreement lay in how revelation takes place and what educational content can add to the experience of conversion or nurture. Neo-orthodox educators like Smith placed much more emphasis on God's revelation in Christ, especially through the New Testament. Jesus was seen as the unique revelation of God. Proponents of the liberal view tended to believe that God was revealed in many ways, including social interaction. Thus, liberals did not dismiss revelation, but they dismissed a certain traditional view of revelation. Liberals believed that revelation was not limited to the Bible or Christian tradition; they also gave attention to experience as a source of revelation. Thus, this debate reflected the tension between experience-based or tradition-based education, or, as Mary-Elizabeth Moore notes, contemporary experience in tension with historical tradition.[52]

In other words, this tension is due to the fact that North American religious education sets contemporary experience and the historical tradition over against one another. Liberal theologians emphasized the immanence of God while neo-orthodox theologians emphasized the transcendence of God. Liberals emphasized experience and the link between theory and practice; neo-orthodox scholars emphasized the Bible as the primary source of knowledge. Liberals embraced science; neo-orthodox believed liberals gave science too much room in theology, reduced Jesus to a moral teacher, and rejected supernatural miracles and signs of the Holy Spirit. Neither of these traditions directly implements Spirit-centered education that nurtures people to experience the Holy Spirit.

[52] Mary Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change, 40.

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Can the conversion and nurture paradigms be adopted separately, depending on the theological position of the local church? This is not an easy question. We know that the experience of God is not restricted to either transcendent or immanent viewpoints; nor is experience restricted to revelation from the Bible. Religious experience can be enriched by science, and the manifestation of God can be seen through history as well as through supernatural intervention. In our methodology for educational ministry, we cannot standardize a uniform religious experience in which conversion is a sign that a person has faith. We know God cannot be boxed into certain concepts. Therefore, to insist on certain subjective experiences of either a conversion or nurture paradigm as universal requirements for the entrance into the kingdom of God violates the nature and the work of the Holy Spirit, as well as the natural variables in human responses to God.

In the above discussion, I have attempted to demonstrate that the problem is in falling victim to the dualistic tendency to set one tradition of theology, source of authority, or educational theory over against another. This, it seems to me, is an error to which Western thinking is especially susceptible, that of raising one method or experience to an authoritative level. Rather than accepting both ideas as being appropriate within different contexts, Western thought in the United States has often placed theories of nurture over against the theories of conversion, insisting that only one can be right.

Ann Taves, an historian interested in studying the interplay between religious experience and the interpretation of that experience, informs us that the

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reason for Coe's reaction against revivalism and especially conversion was that he never had a conversion experience of his own. Thus, she states that Coe recast the experience of revivalism, such as signs of "the power of God" or the "witness of the Holy Spirit," "to be mere manifestations of a particular temperament."[53] In Taves' words,

> Coe (the son of a Methodist minister), grew up with a traditional Methodist understanding of religious experience. When he was young, he said Methodists "laid great store by 'testimony' to a 'personal experience of 'conversion' and 'witness of the Spirit' or 'assurance' that one had been pardoned and 'accepted of God'". Like many of his modernist peers, he never had a conversion experience.--- This absence provoked considerable distress and he turned without success to his father's library in search of answers. ...he finally cut the knot by a rational and ethical act. ---- Although he never received the "internal witness," this act brought an end to his emotional turmoil. It also, in his words, 'started a habit of looking for the core of religious experience in the ethical will; moreover, it led on towards endeavors to explain the experiences that some had while I did not have them.'[54]

From Taves' critique of Coe, we recognize that Coe's lack of a conversion experience, like his modernist peers, created a blind spot making him unable to see conversion as a possible means to experience the Holy Spirit. Because of Coe's own particular way of experiencing religion, and his reaction against the revival method as a universal entrance to the kingdom of God, he leaned toward finding ways to explain religious experience in relation to 'creative education' and 'the democracy of the kingdom of God.' He focused on the theoretical issue of trying to transcend the dualistic tension between tradition and experience; however, he gave no attention to the role of the Holy Spirit.

[53] Taves, 269.

[54] Ibid., 266-69.

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In the same manner, when revivalists dwell on only one standard method of the revival tradition, emphasizing a particular kind of emotional experience of religion, that tradition has also locked itself into a restricted culture and form of Christian nurture. In more recent times, Martin G. Marty's critiqued the1950s mass media revival, suggesting that "it was not so much a revival of historic faith but as a renewal in interest in 'religion-in general.'"[55] He illustrated that, in this revival, "America has tended to package God, to make Him more marketable."[56] As a result, he explained "that young people during the revival knew little about religion."[57] Marty's observation reveals that the emphasis on experiencing religion, particularly in a mass media revival, can be an obstacle to true Pentecost experience or to Christian nurture. How can one teach and preach religion while still transcending this gap between tradition and experience to create a rich Christian nurture? Mary-Elizabeth Moore names these challenges as:

> 1. The challenge of determining the meaning of the historical text for changing contexts;
> 2. The challenge of seeking fresh meanings in the present moment that adds something new to the tradition—it all calls us to discern the voice of God.[58]

She points out that Jewish and Christian communities are tempted to choose between the historical traditions and contemporary experience. The challenge for both traditions, she suggests, is "to discern the voice of God" in historical and

[55] Martin G. Marty, The New Shape of American Religion (New York: Harper, 1959), 6-44 passim.

[56] Ibid., 18.

[57] Ibid., 19.

[58] Mary-Elizabeth Moore, Educatiaon for Continuity and Change, 15.

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cultural context.[59]

I see the paradigms of conversion and nurture as two sides of a coin. We may need them both, whether in different contexts or even in the same church, depending on the different awarenesses of individual Christians. Most of all, we need to teach people an awareness of the experience of the Holy Spirit in both forms; and we need to invite the Holy Spirit to help us discern which approach will enable us to transcend our own limitations. The revivalist, liberal and neo-orthodox scholars all cared about Christian life and experience. Each position still holds some relevance for contemporary churches, which exist in diverse contexts and have diverse persons even within a single context. For those not brought up in Christian families, the adults and children need a chance to respond to the call to the kingdom of God and to a relationship with Christ. Confession of sins and conversion are needed for this response. Those brought up in mature Christian families need to implement a system of experience-centered nurture to reconstruct life and society according to our personal relationship of faith.

Given the diversity of personalities, cultures, psychological development and social upbringing found within any given church as well as among churches today, the common problem among people is an apathy to the presence of God and to the problems within their society. The church is faithful when it is open for dialogue with our rich heritage, when it draws on various disciplines to study contemporary experience, and when it educates people in the Spirit. If this present discussion enables us to sharpen our awareness of the tension between the

[59] Ibid.

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nurture and conversion traditions, and makes us more open to discerning the work of the Holy Spirit, this dissertation will serve its purpose.

Educational Crisis in the United States

The commonality between the religious crises in the United States and China resides in an awakening to religion that fails to integrate the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in mission and education. Rachel Henderlite raises the issue that the church mistakenly adopted "general education" as its own model. In her words:

> It has been the church's great mistake over the years, and without deliberate intent, to set up general education as its model, and then to copy it in objectives, in method, and even in psychological theory. As a consequence, Christian education has been more educational than Christian, and in failing to be both, has led the church into a blind alley from which the church can now extricate itself only with great effort.[60]

She argues further that the church has yet to realize that there is a dimension to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit not found in general education. As a consequence of this hesitation on the part of the church to open itself to the Spirit, it abandons the direction of its own life.[61] In her view, "Christian education must be education for mission, or it is not Christian education."[62] She claims the peril in creating educational theory and mission without having developed doctrines of the Holy Spirit "can mean only death to a church when it forgets its mission to the

[60] Rachel Henderlite, The Holy Spirit in Christian Education (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 15.

[61] Ibid., 16-17.

[62] Ibid., 16.

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world and develops an educational program concerned only with its own life."[63]

What Henderlite started was a conscious effort to draw on the heritage of the church and the possibility of using the Bible and Christian tradition as sources for revealing the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian education. The expected outcome would be an educational design with a truly Christian mission. The task of Christian education is to make Christ known through every means it can provide. However, Henderlite did not develop a model or theory of what this Christian education would look like. She expounded a significant insight that later paved the way for other religious educators who would take into serious account the Spirit of God in humanity.[64]

Susanne Johnson followed Henderlite with a similar claim that there is a phenomenon evident in the church, the so-called culture of new spiritual awakening, which could be described as "spirituality without Christianity."[65] She perceived the educational crisis of the church to be "not so much whether our children will have faith, but whether Christianity will have our children."[66] For her, spirituality is not a given, but a reality to be learned. The church needs to

[63] Ibid., 100.

[64] Ibid., Her basic insight regarding the limitation of Christian education is its failure to take account of human nature as spirit and the Spirit of God as transforming power. Similar insights have been developed by others. See Frank Rogers, "Dancing with Grace: Toward a Spirit-Centered Education," CST Occasional Paper, 1, no. 2, April 1991; Hess, "Educating in the Spirit"; Johnson, Christian Spiritual Formation in the Church and Classroom; Harris, Dance of the Spirit; Mary-Elizabeth Moore, "Meeting in the Silence: Meditation as the Center of Congregational Life," in Congregations: Their Power To Form and Transform ed. C. Ellis Nelson (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988); Loder, Transforming Moment; and Loder, Logic of the Spirit.

[65] Johnson, 12.

[66] Ibid.

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"re-appropriate its Christian spirituality" based on biblical theological themes and to explore spiritual formation as the "decisive guiding image" for its ministry.

She proposes spiritual formation as the key organizing concept for Christian education. The Church is the spiritually formative community, and the Christian Scriptures and tradition, along with reason and experience, are decisive sources that evoke, shape, and sustain the spiritual existence of Christian believers.[67] She introduces participation in spiritual disciplines as a paradigm to invite not just individuals but the church to "live in the Spirit."[68] This involvement sees Christian education initiating a dialogue by which individuals integrate their personal stories into the Christian story.[69] The goal of her model is to overcome the false dichotomy between education as inner-self development (experiential education) and education as tradition (transmitting content) through this dialogue process.[70] As anticipated, she links spiritual direction and the teaching office of the church.[71] However, she does not demonstrate what it would be like for the church or individuals to "live in the Spirit" in a particular era or a particular context.

Both Carol Lakey Hess and Frank Rogers, who studied under James Loder, clarify for us the confusion in Christian education theory. Hess's "Educating in the Spirit" and Rogers' emphasis on "Spirit-Centered education"

[67] Ibid., 14-20.

[68] Ibid. See Chap. 3, 43-60.

[69] Ibid. See Chap. 8, 121-34.

[70] Ibid., 154-55.

[71] Ibid., 137.

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both come to the same conclusion. The confusion is due to the undefined relationship between the Holy Spirit and Christian education, something that has been "widely affirmed, but not clearly understood."[72]

Hess explains that the confusions are primarily educational and theological confusions. The theological confusion is "not primarily due to lack of theological thinking within the discipline of Christian education. Rather it reflects a pervasive problem in theology in general, that there is simply no coherent understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit for education."[73] The words of James Loder, cited by Hess, reiterates the same problem:

> Of all the doctrines central to Christianity, that one (of the Holy Spirit) is the most ill defined, fraught with mystery, and lost in confusion. How the Holy Spirit teaches, comforts, afflicts and leads into "all truth" is largely a theological blank.[74]

Both Rogers and Hess agree that the issue is one that Edward Farley stirred up twenty-five years ago, when he claimed that Christian education did not need the Holy Spirit. From this claim issued the educational confusion. It not only affirmed the pervasive problem of incoherence on this issue; it also conflated nurture and instruction.[75] The Holy Spirit became the X-factor in salvation not

[72] Carol Lakey Hess, Educating in the Spirit, Ph.D. Diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1990, (Ann Arbor, UMI, 1990), 1. Frank Rogers, Karl Barth's Faith Epistemology of the Spirit as a Critical and Constructive Framework for Christian Education, Ph.D. Diss., Princeton Theological Seminary,1991(Ann Arbor, UMI, 1991), 4. Rogers did not use the language of confusion, but the nature of his dissertation is to "bring Barth's theology into explicit dialogue with Christian education."

[73] Ibid., 10-12.

[74] Loder, Transforming Moment, 13.

[75] See Edward Farley, "The Work of the Spirit in Christian Education," Religious Education, 60 (Nov.-Dec.1965): 339-46, 427-36 and 479; Frank Rogers, "Dancing with Grace," 377-395; and in Hess, "Educating in the Spirit," 383-398, and Educating in the Spirit, 38-41.

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covered by human efforts. Hess suggested that this relegated the Holy Spirit to the status of a relief pitcher who came in for the last-minute win, and it made an excuse to neglect the means and end of education.[76] When the church raises this question of what the Holy Spirit has to do with Christian education, it hints to us a common crisis in educational theory that results from not knowing and learning what the dynamics of Spirit can teach churches and individuals.

For both Hess and Rogers, the methodological error is not where the Holy Spirit fits into education, or how the Holy Spirit influences education. Rather, in Hess' language, it is "how education can be in the Spirit."[77] In Rogers' language, it is how education should "participate with the Spirit that precedes and empowers all educational activity."[78] Their emphases, which are basically the core of Spirit-centered education, provide models for learning from the Spirit. In Hess's model, "Educating in the Spirit," she claims that there is an analogy between the work of the Holy Spirit as studied in the biblical texts and the human spirit. In openness to this analogy, Christian education finds a process that is patterned after the Holy Spirit.[79] Her approach is basically to study the theological dynamics of the Holy Spirit and the psychology of human development.

Rogers' model of "Spirit-Centered Education," grounded in Barth's epistemological framework, reflects on the movements of the Holy Spirit as

[76] Hess, Educating in the Spirit, 39-40.

[77] Hess, Educating in the Spirit, 27.

[78] Rogers, "Dancing with Grace," 2.

[79] Hess, "Educating in the Spirit," 384.

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grounded in the theological theme of "justification, empowered in its sanctification and sent forth in its vocation."[80] His work sheds light for us to anticipate learning from the Holy Spirit in the form of dance, in which the steps are: awakening, empowering, redemptive, and listening moments.[81]

The above works that deal directly with integrating the work of the Spirit also enlighten the educational crisis regarding the work of the Holy Spirit. There are two situations. One is that there is no direct learning from the Spirit, especially when Christians view general education or the new spirituality as the model, as raised by Henderlite and Johnson. The other is the complexity of learning from the Spirit. The sources in which we can study from the Spirit are very rich, such as biblical traditions, spiritual disciplines, and the epistemological understanding of the Spirit. Hess suggests that we begin with the analogy of the human spirit and Holy Spirit. Rogers suggests we begin the study with Barth's epistemological framework of the Holy Spirit. However, none of the above theorists built their understandings of the Holy Spirit on a particular historical, socio-cultural context. This is where I diverge from them. This dissertation seeks to draw on insights learned from studying the religious experiences of John Sung and John Wesley to inform an educational practice that honors the role of the Holy Spirit. What will spiritual awakening be like, and what practices will awaken people in the Spirit?

[80] Frank Rogers, "Karl Barth's Faith Epistemology," 1.

[81] Rogers, "Dancing With Grace," 5-8.

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Conclusions

In discussing the theological and educational crisis of conversion versus growth, we have learned that we miss the opportunity to invite people to the experience of the Holy Spirit if we do not remain open to the working of the Holy Spirit in a variety of Christian religious education theories. Our educational crisis has developed because we have considered the work of the Holy Spirit only as an afterthought. The dualistic debate in the first half of the twentieth century among United States religious educators missed the mark by trying to discuss tradition and experience as two theories fighting against another. It is time we seek new models and practices for awakening to the Spirit.

In the next chapters, I will explore John Wesley's awakening experiences to the Holy Spirit, allowing his spiritual experiences and his model for religious practice and leadership to reveal ways of awakening people to the Spirit. This will provide a context for dialogue with John Sung.

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PART THREE

SEEDS FOR AWAKENING IN THE SPIRIT: JOHN WESLEY AND JOHN SUNG

Part Three is a study of John Wesley, an English priest (1703-1791) and John Sung, a Chinese evangelist and revivalist (1901-1944). The central question is how they understood the Holy Spirit in their lives and ministries. These understandings will provide inspiration and guidance for a Spirit-centered education, the topic of Part Five.

This section is a comparative cross-cultural study of John Wesley and John Sung, although direct comparison is seriously limited due to their diverse contexts and life experiences. Here, I will briefly introduce their contexts and life stories. Then, Chapters Four and Five will respectively focus on Wesley's and Sung's understandings of the Holy Spirit.

Two different features of their historical, socio-cultural contexts are briefly mentioned in order to make clear the background of Wesley and Sung and their openness to the Holy Spirit. The first feature is their Christian religious traditions. Wesley was a product of his English society with a long rich tradition that blended and juxtaposed reason, natural religion, morality, the Enlightenment, a love of philosophy, Anglican ecclesiology, Puritanism, Pietism, the Moravian emphasis on spiritual life, and revival traditions.[1] Wesley was influenced by many religious tensions. As Henry Rack points out, one tension was between the Deists' "discounting of mystery and the distinctiveness of Christianity," alongside

[1] Henry D. Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism 2nd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), x, 1-33.

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revival traditions that emphasized a supernatural view of the world.[2] John Sung also experienced religious tensions, but they were different. Sung was influenced by the early twentieth century progressive Christianity associated with mission schools, the social gospel, and liberal theology; at the same time, he experienced the Methodist Holiness Movement and revival traditions of China. Even though Sung later attacked liberal theology and the social gospel of missionaries, Sung's ministry is inseparable from their contributions and influences. The different religious tensions experienced by Wesley and Sung are reflected in their understandings of the Holy Spirit. Wesley was more inclined to give doctrinal explanations; Sung favored sharing spiritual experiences more than developing doctrines.

The second difference between the two men is seen in the dynamic of two significantly different societies. Compared to twentieth century China, eighteenth century England was more stable, not struggling with revolution and war on its land. At the same time, pre-industrial England was a place of great economic and social inequality, with extremes of poverty and wealth, serious literacy problems, child labor, rural struggles, slave trade, educational upheaval, political struggles within the church of England, and conflicts between the church of England and other religious bodies.[3] Wesley faced the social challenges of his time to bring

[2] Ibid., 30, 33.

[3] Ibid., 4, 8-11; and also R.W. Malcolmson, Life and Labour in England, 1700-1800 (London: Hutchinson, 1981), 11-14, 108f., 130ff; John H. Whiteley, Wesley's England: A Survey of XVIIIth Century Social and Cultural Conditions, 4th ed. (London: Epworth Press, 1954), 295; Robert G. Tuttle, Jr., John Wesley: His Life and Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 35; Chul Baik, Christian Religious Education for the Formation of Full Humanity:

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spiritual revival and social reform. Twentieth century China faced crises and wars in even greater proportions, creating for Sung a sense of urgency to call people to repentance and prepare for the coming of Christ. The Chinese civilization was threatened, and during this period a major anti-Christian movement was underway. At the same time, a new form of government was emerging. (See Chapter Two.) For both Wesley and Sung, the social environment and the upheavals were influential, even though the environments were different in many ways.

In addition to social-cultural differences, the life experiences of John Wesley and John Sung were distinct. Wesley was the fourteenth or fifteenth child among nineteen children born to Samuel and Susanna.[4] Raised by his eccentric rector father and disciplinary mother in rural Epworth, England, his parents imprinted on him a disciplinary life that involved learning linguistic and practical divinity, obedience, spiritual submission, and an authoritarian style of handling ministry and relationships.[5] Wesley was called a "radical conversative," a

A Comparative Cross-Cultural Study of Yi T'Oegye and John Wesley, Ph.D. diss., Claremont School of Theology, 1999 (Ann Arbor, UMI,1999), 137.

[4] L. Tyerman, The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, vol. 1. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890), 15; Albert Outler, ed., John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 5-6; and Rack, 48. The confusion about whether Wesley was the fourteenth or fifteenth child was due to the fact that there were two dead infants, John and Benjamin, born before Wesley. When Wesley was baptized, he was called John Benjamin.

[5] John Newton, Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism (London: Epworth Press, 1968); Vivian H. H. Green, The Young Mr. Wesley (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), 49ff; Anthony Armstrong, The Church of England: The Methodists and Society, 1700-1850 (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1973), 56; Philio Greven, The Protestant Temperament: Patterns of Child-Rearing, Religious Experience, and the Self in Early America (New York: Knopf, 1977), 53ff, 93; and Rack, 54ff.

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"romantic realist," or a "quiet revolutionary."[6] He was considered an elusive character who contributed to the Methodist movement that "included Christian nurture, discipline, and pastoral care."[7] He published more than 400 publications on nearly every topic during his lifetime. His carried out an itinerant ministry, traveling on horseback, with more than 40,000 sermons being preached during a life span of sixty-six years.[8] John Sung, on the other hand, was the sixth of ten children born to a Chinese Methodist pastor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Sung Hsueh Lien, in the rural village of Hong Chek, in the prefecture of Hinghwa, Fukien Province, China.[9] His parents and the Highhwa revival imprinted on Sung the significance of the Bible, prayer, story telling, spiritual healing, and being filled by the Holy Spirit.[10] Sung was called the "Chinese John the Baptist," and the "Chinese John Wesley," which reflected his passion for spiritual revival in China and Asia.[11] Within his short fourteen years of ministry, he spread the

[6] Richard P.Heitzenrater, The Elusive Mr. Wesley, Vol. 1: John Wesley His Biographer (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 21.

[7] Outler, John Wesley, 18.

[8] Heitzenrater, The Elusive Mr. Wesley, 1:21-30.

[9] Sung, Diary, 1-2; John Sung , My Testimony, 10th ed. (Hong Kong: Bellman House, 1991), 7-8; Yih Ling Liu, Life of John Sung (1962; reprint, Hong Kong: Christian Communication, 1997), 25-26.

[10] Sung, Diary, 1-5; Sung , My Testimony, 7-28; and Liu, Life of John Sung, 25-35.

[11] John Sung, "Out of Modernism into God's Family," in Andrew Gih, Into God's Family: The Life Stories and Message of China's Famous Bethel Evangelistic Bands, (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1933), 58; Timothy Tow, "John Sung and His Legacy in Singapore," The Burning Bush, vol.1, no.1(Jan. 1995): 1st pars. [journal on line]; accessed 15 May 2000; available from http:// www.lifefebc.com/BurnBush/artvlnla4.html; Leslie T. Lyall, Flame for God: John Sung and Revival in the Far East (London: Overseas Missionary Fellowship, 1972), xv; David Smithers, John Sung the Apostle of Revival, 23 May, 2000, on-line, available from http:// www.watchword.org/article/smithers/ww51a.html. Chinese John the Baptist was based on an understanding of Sung's own image of himself who shared a mission similar to that of John the Baptist. Smithers claimed that many others (whom he did not identify) saw Sung as the Chinese John Wesley based on Sung's admiration of John Wesley expressed in his diary and his ministry.

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"living flame of gospel zeal" and was believed to have converted more than 100,000 Chinese to be witnesses for Christ.[12] He was believed to have traveled more than 50,000 miles, covering at least thirteen of the Chinese provinces and many Asian countries.[13] The significance of each man to the Christian church of his time is clearly evident.

My particular focus will attempt to capture John Wesley's and John Sung's understandings of the Holy Spirit. In Wesley's case (in Chapter Four), I will draw on sources from Wesley's diaries, letters, and sermons, as well as secondary sources to capture his understanding of the Holy Spirit. In Sung's case (in Chapter Five), I will likewise draw on diaries and sermons, as well as secondary sources on Sung for added reflection.

[12] William E. Schubert, I Remember John Sung (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 1976), 8; Lyall, ix; Timothy Tow, Asian Awakening, (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1988). All three depicted the same image of Sung: stirring the passions of the Chinese people.

[13] Lyall, 97; and Bays, "Christian Revivals in China, 1900-1937," 171-72. Leung, "Revivalists' Influence and Shaping of the Chinese churches," Jian Dao: A Journal of Bible and Theology 11(Jan. 1999): 110. Leung claimed that Sung had preached to at least 500,000 people and led about 50,000 people to Christ. Bays claimed that "by 1935, Sung had travelled 50,000 miles, visited 133 cities, and held almost 3,400 revivals at churches of all denominations." Lyall recorded that Sung had traveled a total of 54, 823 miles, covering a total of 13 provinces, holding 1,199 meetings. All of these records mainly recorded his early ministry with the Bethel Band, not yet including his later ministry to Asian countries, which clearly shows the vast expanse as well as the significance of his ministry.

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CHAPTER 4

Seeds for Awakening and Living in the Spirit in John Wesley

Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit can be grasped through several themes in his life and ministry. The purpose of this section is to examine these themes and thus explore Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit. The themes will be examined from more than one angle in order to demonstrate how Wesley connects his theory of knowledge of the Holy Spirit to salvation, faith, and good works in a Christian life that aims for inward and social holiness. This understanding, when compared with that of John Sung, can uncover seeds for a Spirit-centered Christian education grounded in spiritual disciplines. It will prepare people for spiritual awakening as I will discuss in the final chapter.

Yearning

Two questions are used to comprehend Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit. First, from where did Wesley's yearning to understand the Holy Spirit come? Second, what did this yearning reveal about his understanding of the Holy Spirit? To answer these questions, I trace four examples of Wesley's yearning. First is the Rectory Fire in 1709. Second is the Haunted Rectory in 1716-1717. Third is the period of his Holy Club years. Fourth is his encounter with Moravians during and after the Georgia Mission. Each of these examples shows how Wesley's yearning for salvation, concern for saving souls, and yearning for assurance of faith were part of his spiritual awakening to God's providential grace.

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For Wesley, the yearning began when he was six years old, when God planted a seed of yearning for salvation through a providential rescue from the rectory fire in 1709. His retelling of the rescue story throughout his life demonstrates that the Rectory Fire served as a remarkable sign of God's providence. According to Rack and Heitzenrater, by at least 1737, Wesley portrayed himself as one "plucked out of the burning," a phrase he adapted from the Old Testament (cf. Amos 4:11; Zech. 3:21).[1] The origin of this self-image was the belief of Wesley's mother that God had special mission for her son, and that he needed special nurture. In her meditation journal of 1711, Susanna said,

> I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that thou so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of Thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success.[2]

The rescue is a significant beginning point for understanding Wesley's interest in God's Spirit as a parallel work of providential grace. Wesley later published Susanna's letter to a neighboring cleric, Rev. Mr. Hoole, in his monthly *Arminian Magazine* (1778). In that publication, Wesley stated his belief that it was his father's prayer commending him to God that caused him to wake up during the fire.[3] In his account, he believed that the timing of his awakening and

[1] Henry Moore, The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, vol. 1, (New York: N. Bangs and J.Emory, 1824), 98-101; Richard P. Heitzenrater, The Elusive Mr. Wesley: John Wesley His Own Biographer Vol. 1, ibid., 40; Henry D. Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism, ibid., 57.

[2] John Newton, Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism (London: Epworth Press, 1968),111; Heitzenrater, ibid., 41-42; Rack, ibid., 57.

[3] Moore, ibid., 99-100; Heitzenrater, ibid., 38-40. Susanna's letter was dated August 24, 1709.

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his rescue were answers to his father's prayer and signs of God's deliverance. Though Wesley denied Samuel Badcock's accusation that he had much awareness of the extraordinary work God planned for him in1784, he affirmed that God had indeed planted a desire in him "to save [his] own soul and those that heard" him.[4]

To what extent Wesley fully recognized that God planted this spiritual awakening in him for saving souls is not easy to determine. But the theme of salvation and waking up was certainly a desire of Wesley. Many have argued that his parents at least saw this significance and taught Wesley to see it that way in order to prepare him for responding to God's providence.[5]

The second example of Wesley's yearning was his fascination with supernatural phenomena. Wesley demonstrated his fascination with supernatural experiences throughout his life, especially shown in the record of the haunted rectory in 1716-1717. He first transcribed his father's diary to follow the events, recording them extensively in his own diary on September 13, 1726.[6] He shared his father's account of the noises to prisoners in the Oxford castle, as early as 1730.[7] He eventually published an account of it in the *Arminian Magazine* in 1784.[8] Evidences of this interest are very fully documented. Wesley's biographers affirmed that Wesley had a long-standing interest in supernatural

[4] Heitzenrater, ibid., 43. The response was first published in the Gentleman Magazine and later reprinted in the Arminian Magazine in 1784.

[5] Heitzenrater, ibid., 38-43; Rack notes in 571-572; and G.J. Stevenson, Memorial of the Wesley Family (London, 1876), 106.

[6] Heitzenrater, ibid., 44-45; and Rack, ibid., 59.

[7] Heitzenrater, ibid., 45.

[8] Ibid., and also in Rack, ibid., 59.

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phenomena, "confirming his awareness of the unseen world."[9] Tyerman concluded that this supernatural experience significantly influenced Wesley's life "respecting invisible realities, and in making him one of the most earnest preachers of the Christian creed that ever lived."[10] As these biographers illustrate, Wesley understood the Holy Spirit as supernatural, something one may not fully comprehend, but for which it is important to be receptive. This view of the nature of the Spirit's work will be explored further later.

The third example of yearning is found in Wesley's Holy Club years 1729-1735. During this period, Wesley demonstrated his yearning for inward and social holiness. Joining with his friends and undergraduates, he and his brother Charles led the group in academic disciplines as well as the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, confession, love feast, and communion. They also visited the sick and prisoners and helped poor students. The enthusiastic group around the Wesley brothers was later teased by society with the names "The Holy Club," "the Bible Moths" or "The Methodists."[11]

The best indicator of Wesley's yearning for spiritual experience during these years was perhaps the letter to his mother Susanna, written when he was a tutor at Oxford. Dated August 17, 1733, Wesley showed that his spiritual experiences depended on three principles. First, as he stated, "I depend on the

[9] Rack, ibid., 59; L. Tyerman, The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, vol. 1. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890), 24; and V.H. H. Green, The Young Mr. Wesley (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), 59.

[10] Tyerman, ibid., 24.

[11] Tyerman, ibid., 1: 71; David Guy, "Apostle of Social Holiness," in John Stacy, ed. John Wesley: Contemporary Perspectives (London: Epworth Press, 1988), 118.

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Holy Spirit to direct me, in and by my own experience and reflection, joined to the advice of my religious friends here and elsewhere." This showed his dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and religious friends. Second, he observed "the spirit of meekness." Third, he sought to be "long suffering."[12] The last two principles were referring to strict piety and his state of searching for inward and social holiness.

From the above observation, Heitzenrater shows Wesley's belief that "hope of salvation rested on one's sincerity," and that "persecution was a necessary mark of a Christian."[13] During this period, Wesley sought God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit through strict spiritual discipline and through accountable relationships with others. His understanding of the ways that people awaken in the Holy Spirit was based on spiritual and intellectual discipline.

The fourth example of yearning is Wesley's reflection on his inner struggle during and after the Georgia Mission, between 1735-1738. His yearnings for personal relationship with the Holy Spirit were triggered by his fear of death during the voyage to America, by lack of assurance of salvation, and by a complex relationship with Sophia Hopkey.

For Wesley, his yearning also reflected the spiritual awakening to his inner life, struggling to connect his understanding of Christian knowledge to Christian faith. There were several dimensions in his awakenings. First, Wesley was

[12] Frank Baker, ed., The Works of John Wesley: Letters I & II. Vols. 25 of The Works of John Wesley. Bicentennial ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980; reprint, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), 25:354-355; and Heitzenrater, ibid., 71.

[13] Heitzenrater, ibid.

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awakening to a limitation of religious experience and faith. In his words,

> I went to America to convert the Indians but, oh, who shall convert me? Who, what, is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well, nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near. But let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled.[14]

Thus, Wesley displayed doubts about his own conversion, his faith and inner struggle. His knowledge of salvation was insufficient. He expressed his yearning of faith in saying "[t]he faith that I want is a sure trust and confidence in God[.]"[15]

The second dimension of spiritual awakening was sharper, revealing his lack of assurance regarding salvation and the Holy Spirit. Wesley was impressed by the calmness of the Moravians when faced with the threats of the storms.[16] Finding himself drawn to the Moravian leader, A. G. Spangenberg, Wesley recorded in his diary, dated February 7, 1736,

> He said, 'My brother, I must ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God? I was surprised, and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, "Do you know Jesus Christ?' I paused, and said, 'I know he is the Saviour of the world.' 'True', replied he, 'but do you know he has saved you?' I answered, 'I hope he has died to save me.' He only added, 'Do you know yourself?' I said, 'I do.' But I fear they were vain words.[17]

Based on the conversation, Wesley was uncertain about his salvation, and doubtful about his close relationship with Jesus and the Spirit of God.

[14] John Wesley, The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, ed. N. Curnock 8 volumes (1912; reprint. London: Epworth Press, 1938), I: 418.[hereafter Curnock ed.]

[15] Cf. "Of the True and Lively Faith," in the Homilies, IV; and Outler, ibid., 49.

[16] Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 1: 140, 142-143; and also Rack, ibid., 114-115.

[17] Reginald A. Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., The Works of John Wesley: Journal and Diaries. Vols. 18 of The Works of John Wesley. Bicentennial ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 18:146. [hereafter Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed.]

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The third dimension was Wesley's yearning to find connection between justification and sanctification. On 31 July 1737, he had another conversation with Spangenberg regarding conversion and the rule of conduct. Spangenberg told him that conversion meant "passing from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God; that this 'passing' can be gradual, though sometimes wrought in a moment."[18] The answer helped Wesley grasp the Moravian view that conversion could lead to instantaneous justification and perfection. Spangenberg also told him that by works faith is made perfect, explaining with the instruction to "read the Scripture, hear it, fasting, self-examination, the instructions of experienced persons, fervent prayer."[19] Rack comments that this conversation paired "Wesley's old concern with 'primitive' practice with the newer anxiety about grace, faith and conversion."[20] Wesley was challenged to embrace instantaneous justification, and his interest in perfection was heightened.

The fourth dimension was Wesley's yearning for the personal experience of the Holy Spirit, as a parallel to faith and happiness. The famous question that Wesley raised to the Moravian leader, Peter Böhler, was "How can one preach to others, who have no faith yourself."[21] The famous response was: "Preach faith till

[18] Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., I:372; n. 1 based on Act 26: 25-33; and n.2. based on Act 16:25-34 and Act 2:37.

[19] Ibid.; Martin Schmidt, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, trans. Denis Inman and Norman P Goldhawk, 2 vols. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1973), I: 156.; and Rack, ibid., 122. The Scripture's references for these practices were 2Chron. 34:14; Acts 16:14; Joel 2:12; Lam. 3:40; and Act 2:37.

[20] Rack, ibid.

[21] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 18: 228.

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you have it; and then because you have it you will preach faith."[22] Another example of Wesley's yearning is shown in Wesley's response to Böhler's deep and lively faith. On March 23, 1738, Wesley commented, "I met Peter Böhler again, who now amazed me more and more, by the account he gave of the fruits of living faith--the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it."[23] Later, Wesley tested this in the Greek Testament, to see whether "this doctrine was of God."[24] There, Wesley found the experience of faith equated with the demonstration of emotions like Böhler's holiness and happiness, and he became more convinced each day that the assurance of faith came in the moment of conversion. This understanding left him spiritually depressed and frustrated. He said,

> I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God had thus wrought in themselves; giving them in a moment such a faith—out of fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help thou my unbelief.[25]

The yearning served as a driving force toward spiritual awakening. Heitzenrater noted that Wesley became interested in "the work of the Holy Spirit in the Great Awakening in New England through the writings of Jonathan Edwards."[26]

Wesley's yearning was not just to understand the work of the Holy Spirit but also to have a relationship with the Holy Spirit that would deepen his faith and

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., 232.

[24] Ibid., Wesley particularly referred to the text of John 7:17.

[25] Ibid., 234.

[26] Ibid., 92.

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result in interior and social holiness. Heitzenrater notes that Wesley raised the two-fold problem: "[W]hat is the proper understanding and relationship of faith and works, and upon what authority should a correct theological answer be based?"[27] He concludes that Wesley's assurance of salvation was based on "holding on a correct set of beliefs,-- (scripture, tradition, reason) and resulting in a proper set of actions." Wesley "had not been introduced to the idea that faith and hope might rest on a more personal appropriation of the atoning work of Christ, experienced through the Holy Spirit."[28] According to Heitzenrater's explanation, before Aldersgate, Wesley yearned for a personal experience of Christ through the Holy Spirit. Wesley's reflection revealed his awareness of his own lack of experience and the limitation of his intellectually held doctrines.

Wesley's yearning revealed his understanding of how God awakens people, that it is a process of slowly awakening to God's presence, to providential grace, and to the various forms by which God awakens people. It was not his last experience; his spiritual awakening was just beginning.

Dramatic Turns

The experience of the Holy Spirit can take the form of dramatic turns. This section examines Wesley's "spiritual upheavals and frustrations from the Aldersgate experience of May 24, 1738, that lasted into the spring of 1739."[29] In

[27] Heitzenrater, ibid., 93.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Outler, ibid., 14ff. Outler listed more in details Wesley's fluctuations of mood and temper from at least ten months before Welsey's Aldersgate experience and through March 1739.

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this section, I will explore Wesley's Aldersgate experience, his emotional roller coaster ride, his understanding of the Holy Spirit as perceptible inspiration, and his teaching that one should leave the wilderness to enter the spirit-led journey.

Albert Outler identified Wesley's Aldersgate as "one in a series of the turning points in his passage from don to missionary to evangelist."[30] From Wesley's description of the Aldersgate experience, May 24, 1738, I will highlight two important features that reveal his understanding of spiritual awakening.

First, is the feature of seeking guidance from Scripture. In Wesley's understanding, experience of the Holy Spirit was inseparable from guidance of the Holy Spirit through Scripture. On May 24, 1738, he found great and precious promises in his devotion. The first Scripture was "Ye should be partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4)" and the second Scripture was "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Mark 12:34).[31] And when he was tempted to doubt his feeling of being "strangely warmed" and missing joy, several Scriptures came to his mind. One was "peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation" (Heb. 2:10). He accepted that "God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth, according to the counsels of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). He received assurance as a conqueror when another Scripture came to him that God "sent me help from his holy place" (Psalms 20:2; 24:3; Heb. 9:12).[32]

The second feature of this Aldersgate experience was the distinct and

[30] Outler, ibid., 52.

[31] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 18: 249.

[32] Wesley, Ibid., 250.

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conscious awareness of felt religion. Wesley recorded that his experience of being "strangely warmed" occurred as someone was "reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans," and while someone "was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ."[33] Here Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit was what Outler called transforming power that changed Wesley's belief from "aspiration to assurance."[34]

However, the experience of faith did not last. His diary showed his anxiety for lacking the stereotypical emotion of joy, as anticipated by the Moravians. Moreover, he did not feel the instantaneous holiness and happiness that he envied; instead he was awakened to the reality of his own temptations and fears. I refer to that anxiety as Wesley's emotional roller coaster ride.

Wesley's diary illustrated his search for a lasting experience of faith accompanied by peace, joy and love. On May 25, Wesley recorded that "yet the enemy injected a fear: 'if thou dost believe, why is there not a more sensible change?'"[35] On May 26, the following day, he recorded more ambivalence. He said, "My soul continued in peace, but yet in heaviness, because of manifold temptations."[36] On May 27, Wesley tried to resolve this missing joy through prayer; he found his spirit lifted, but still no indication of joy. He said,

> Believing one reason of my want of joy was want of time for prayer, I resolved to do no business till I went to church in the morning, but to continue pouring out my heart before him---and this day my spirit was

[33] Wesley, Ibid., 18:249-250.

[34] Outler, ibid., 14.

[35] Wesley, Works, ibid., 18: 250-251.

[36] Ibid., 18:251.

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> enlarged; so that though I was now also assaulted by many temptations, I was more than a conqueror, gaining more power thereby to trust and to rejoice in God my Savior.[37]

On May 28, Wesley remarked, "I waked in peace, but not in joy."[38] On May 29, when he compared himself with another Moravian, Mr. Wolf, he reflected:

> I was much strengthened by the grace of God in him, yet was his state so far above mine I was tempted to doubt whether we had one faith.[39]

On June 1 and 3, Wesley recorded more temptations. Finally, on June 4, he said, "I had still more comfort, and peace, and joy; on which I fear I began to presume."[40] On June 4, he did not mention in what context he began to experience joy. However, this series of diary entries demonstrate that this Aldersgate experience began a life-long process of searching for assurance of faith through the witness of the Spirit, knowing that life is full of temptations, inner struggles, and emotional roller-coaster rides.

Wesley's frustration is best understood in the letter to his brother, Samuel, dated October 30, 1738. Describing the new experience, Wesley wrote: "I now enjoy - the seal of the Holy Spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart," though without experiencing "joy unspeakable, and full of glory – this witness of the Spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it."[41] Here, though Wesley did not directly refer to the new dimension associated with the Aldersgate experience, he

[37] Ibid., 251-252.

[38] Ibid., 252.

[39] Ibid., 253.

[40] Wesley, 18: 253-254.

[41] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 25:576-577.

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claimed he was beginning to enjoy "the seal of the Holy Spirit" in his life. This "seal" was a beginning point in his spiritual experience. The letter to his brother shows how, in that period, Wesley identified spiritual experience in terms of the "witness of the Spirit," whereby Christians could feel the "love of God shed abroad in my heart" and find "joy in the Holy Ghost." He added that without such experience Christians would, like he, be "in that imperfect sense wherein I call myself such[.]"[42]

That letter to his brother Samuel shows how Wesley began to pray for the experience of the witness of the Spirit for himself and others, and he bore witness that there were "many who have received it, more than one or two in the very hour we were praying for it."[43] He desired for himself the Christian experience of the "witness of the Spirit." The letter showed that, due to his anxiety and lack of joy, he was not certain he had the witness of the Spirit. It also shows the influence on him of the Moravians and their evangelical view of assurance of faith, in which one receives the joy of salvation instantaneously and completely upon conversion. In Ann Taves' analysis of Wesley's early 1730s experience of the witness of the Spirit, she writes that Wesley "tended to conflate [his] understanding of both conversion and sanctification experiences."[44] Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit at that period was immature in that he expected the experience of the Holy Spirit to lead one on a smooth ride to heaven and

[42] Ibid., 577.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Taves, Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James, ibid., 50.

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perfect love.

Wesley's understanding of his dramatic turns and the nature of the Holy Spirit matured over years. The clearest source of this awareness is from his on-going correspondence with an anonymous Anglican cleric, known only by the name John Smith; that correspondence lasted from September 1745 to March 1748.[45] Among these letters, Taves highlights Wesley's usage of the phrase "perceptible inspiration" of the Holy Spirit as the key doctrine that distinguished Methodists.[46] In his important letter to John Smith, Wesley claims

> inspiration of God's Holy Spirit whereby he fills us with righteousness, peace, and love to him and to all. And we believe it can not be, in the nature of things, that a [person] should be filled with this peace and joy and love by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost without perceiving it, as clearly as he does the light of the Sun. This is the main doctrine of the Methodist. This is the substance of what we all preach. And I will still believe, none is a true Christian till he experiences it—And this I take to be the very foundation of Christianity."[47]

In this letter, Wesley expresses clearly his belief that the witness of the Spirit is the central Christian experience and the foundation of Christianity, and that this experience would be as clear to the believer as the light of the Sun. God's Spirit would fill the believers with inward and outward holiness; the love for God and toward all humanity was the goal of this holiness.

Randy Maddox explains that Wesley understood the Holy Spirit as

[45] Outler, ibid., 3; Moore, ibid., II: 277-322; Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26: 125-127,138-145, 153-161, 164-172, 175-183, 184-190,197-207, 209-215, 229-242, 244-252, 258-261, 287-294.

[46] Taves, ibid., 51; and Wesley, ibid., 26:181-182.

[47] Wesley, ibid., 26: 181. Charles charged that a denial of the perceptibility of the inspiration of the inspiration of the Spirit is a denial of the Spirit's work per se, in Sermon 3, "Awake, Thou that Sleepest," Works, Bicentennial ed., 1:155.

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perceptible in some form to believers. This "perceptibility of grace" can be accessible on two levels. One is that believers can not see every instance of God's gracious works, but only some crucial instances. Another is that, while the Holy Spirit is not perceived per se, the believer does experience the effects of the Spirit's inspirations: love, peace, and joy.[48]

As Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit matured, he began to teach people about the journey in the spiritual wilderness in order that people would continue their walk toward what I call Spirit-led holiness.[49] Even though Wesley did not spell out his own wilderness, it is not hard to trace from his teachings the resolutions he found to his emotional roller coaster ride. From the frequency of the wilderness state sermon, Wesley's understanding seems to be that the Holy Spirit, together with the Scripture, serve as guides for Christians, enabling them to pass safely through, and eventually leave, the wilderness state.

Wesley raised two reflective questions: Is a Christian meant to remain in the wilderness state of darkness in order to be purified to holiness? And how does one find the way out of that state of darkness? In answering these questions, Wesley elaborated the nature of the wilderness, the cause of the wilderness experience and the cure of the wilderness, in order to support his argument that Christians are not meant to remain in the wilderness forever, but are meant to

[48]Randy L. Maddox, Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Methodology (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 128-129.

[49] Edward H. Sudgen, John Wesley's Fifty-Three Sermons (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 580. In Sugden's editorial notes, this sermon on 'the Wilderness State was first preached in March 28, 1740, 8 times in 1751, 21 times in 1752, 4 times in 1753, once each in 1754,1755, 1756.

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move forward in holiness.[50]

For Wesley, the nature of the state of wilderness is characterized as a disease, wherein Christians dwell in the darkness of sins, doubts, fear, indifference, and in ignorance of that danger. Many Christians fall after they have believed. Such falls are occasioned by one of five religious losses: 1) loss of faith, or loss of the light of heaven or loss of the inward demonstration of the Spirit; 2) loss of love for the souls of men and women; 3) loss of joy in the Holy Spirit; 4) loss of the peace of God; and 5) loss of power over sin. Wesley described this as a state of a Christian "dispossessed of righteousness, as well as of peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[51]

Wesley argued, however, that the wilderness state is not caused by the Spirit of God withdrawing from the individual, but from Christian's desertion of God.[52] He claimed that God might restore the sinner to His favor in His own time and manner. The expectation of joy in the Holy Spirit and the peace of God "will be far more effectual when purified by sorrow and the dross of earthly affections" as the mystic teaches.[53] This desire to walk in the light and joy of the Spirit again is where Wesley departed from mystic teaching.

Wesley further said that the causes of staying in the "state of wilderness" are sin, ignorance, and temptations. Examples of those sins, listed by Wesley are: 1) sins of commission whereby one commits a single act of willful sin, 2) sin of

[50] Ibid., 580-595.

[51] Ibid., 582-584.

[52] Ibid., 584.

[53] Ibid., 594.

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omission, such as neglecting prayer, not warning about the wrongs of the neighbors, giving way to pride, anger, love for this world and 'spiritual sloth.' Wesley defined spiritual sloth as the state in which "we do not stir up the gift of God which is in us," "we do not agonize continually to enter in at the strait gate," "we do not take the kingdom of God by violence," and "we are faint in mind." This is a state of ease and indolence, the starting point of a soul's darkness, whereby "it will destroy the light of God."[54] Hence, the cause of the wilderness state is conscious committing of sin or the slothful choice not to move resolutely toward the light, nor to seek for guidance of the inner light of the Spirit.

Spiritual sloth is a form of spiritual ignorance, which is a contributing cause of the state of wilderness. Wesley held that spiritual sloth is ignorance of Scripture's promises of the state of light and joy and it is much better to labor to reach that state than to expect darkness, leading one to a life of darkness. He criticized the "Romish Church" for acceptance of walking on a dark uncomfortable path as though God desired it for us, so that people, "if ever they receive soon lose the light of God." Wesley argued from the Scriptures that the state of wilderness is just a transition for the spiritual journey but not without promises to be guided by the Spirit to walk in the light.[55]

Another cause is the temptation of thinking too highly of ourselves—as one free of sins —as if we had been cleansed from all sin and have no need to call instantly upon God. Wesley urged people to move from the "warmth of first

[54] Ibid., 587.

[55] Ibid., 588.

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love" to a continual journey of seeking the Spirit's guidance in the journey of holiness.[56] This demonstrates Wesley's understanding that justification by faith is not the end but the beginning of the journey toward sanctification in perfect love.

Other than identifying these specifics, Wesley suggested the four best ways to prevent this state of wilderness. First, teach believers to expect temptation, "seeing they dwell in an evil world, among wicked, subtle, malicious spirits, and have a heart capable of all evil." Second, convince Christians that the "whole work of sanctification is not as they imagined, wrought at once" but "when they first believe they are but as new-born babes, who are gradually to grow up, and may expect many storms before they come to the full stature of Christ." Third, instruct Christians not to reason with the devil but to pour out their hearts and troubles to God. Fourth, apply precious promises and remove the ignorance of the experience.[57] These four instructions show the significance of nurturing a realistic awareness that Christians will face temptations, storms, growth, and Satan's accusations.

In short, Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit involved a series of spiritual awakenings toward inward and social holiness, which is to restore perfection in love, not instantaneously but through a gradual process. However, this process is not a smooth journey. Christians can experience God's grace in different forms, can feel and witness gracious works of God, but Christians also have to be aware of the temptations and the possibility of the wilderness

[56] Ibid., 584-589.

[57] Ibid., 595.

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experience. Spiritual awakening for Wesley was also about being roused from one's own darkness, one's own tendency to sin, to fail to respond to the wrongful acts of fellow Christians, to give in to anger, pride, love for the world, and remain in ignorance of the promises of the Scripture. Spiritual awakening involves the expectation to walk in the light and seek the Spirit that leads people out of the wilderness. Wesley demonstrated the need to teach a Spirit-led model of holiness.

Supernatural Experience and Healing

The activity of the Holy Spirit can take the form of supernatural experiences and healing. This section examines Wesley's understanding of the works of the Holy Spirit from the supernatural experiences and healing in his ministry. I will illustrate how Wesley reflected on such experiences, and his understanding that they could be nurtured in his ministry.

One claim needs to be spelled out in order to provide a position from which to discuss the significance of supernatural phenomena of the Holy Spirit in John Wesley's ministry. Wesley never downplayed the significance of the supernatural nor the outward signs of the Holy Spirit. Ann Taves, who examines Wesley's experiences of the Holy Spirit, points out that efforts to minimize these experiences were not his but those of "Methodist historians, wanting to downplay the role of these 'outward symptoms' in the Methodist movement[.]"[58] She further states that Methodist historians have generally wanted to misread Wesley's own reflections made twenty years after the January 1739 experience.

[58] Taves, 57.

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As an example, she refers to Wesley's statement that "these general outward symptoms do attend the beginning of a general work of God—[b]ut after time they generally decrease, and the work goes on more quietly and silently."[59] She criticizes historians who wanted to read that those outward signs disappeared instead of decreased.[60] Henry Rack's analysis makes the same point--that the outbreak of revivals and experience of the supernatural phenomena continued even a few decades later as Wesley spoke of them in 1744, 1759, and continuing throughout the 1780s and 1790s, during revivals in old-established societies.[61] Rack explains that "later biographers found early supernaturalism embarrassing, and not least when Wesley believed in it;" thus they excluded these events in the study.[62]

Building on the works which reclaim the significance of the supernatural phenomena of the Holy Spirit in Wesley, this section will examine the experience of supernatural phenomena and the healing ministry in Wesley and the Methodists, individually and collectively. Drawing on his diary, journal, and letters, after 1738 until his death, I highlight some samples of Wesley's reflection on the work of the Holy Spirit, especially the most intensive period of January-May 1739.

[59] W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds. Journals and Diaries, IV (1755-65), vol. 21 of The Works of John Wesley, bicentennial ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 223, quoted by Ward and Heitzenrater in the introduction, 18: 48-49; and Taves, 57.

[60] Taves, ibid., 57.

[61] Rack, ibid., 195.

[62] Ibid.

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Out of the samples, I will draw out Wesley's three basic understandings of the work of the Holy Spirit. First, the work of the Holy Spirit can be displayed in supernatural phenomena which can be experienced by individuals and the collective. Second, the work of the Holy Spirit can be experienced in its therapeutic nature of both physical and spiritual healing. Third, Wesley understood that by invoking the Holy Spirit either to confirm Scripture or to seek deliverance, the Holy Spirit can perfect Christian holiness.

According to his first understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, I illustrate Wesley's supernatural experience at the love feast and New Year's Eve service at Fetter Lane Society (the term at that time for the church community) in 1739 and will present his reflection on that experience. It was the first sign of a collective supernatural experience. From that prayer service on, for the next five to six months, particularly during April and May, supernatural phenomena displayed themselves most evidently in Wesley's ministries. In Wesley's words,

> Monday, January 1, 1739. Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchings, and my brother Charles were present at our love-feast in Fetter Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'[63]

In this narrative, Wesley describes a collective experience of the supernatural presence in the midst of about 60 people. He called that supernatural work of the Holy Spirit "the power of God." It occurred at an obviously long prayer meeting (lasting until 3 a.m.) which followed after the gathering of a love

[63] Wesley, Works, Bicentenniel ed., 19:26.

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feast. This love feast, as Taves points out, was "the Agape meal of plain cake and water adapted from the Moravians."[64] The phenomenon of this experience was marked with fits which caused many to fall to the ground with exceeding joy, and concluded by uniting all in praise and worship. Prayer seemed to be the culmination of God's spiritual visits on them as the congregation was united in worship.

This striking supernatural experience seemed, ironically, to awaken in Wesley an awareness of deprivation which Wesley recorded in his diary three days after the Fetter Lane event. Rather than being overwhelmed with joy, Wesley discovered his own empty spiritual state. First, he was aware of his lack of love of God. Wesley reflected on his spiritual state in these words, "For a Christian is one who has the fruits of the Spirit of Christ, which—are love, peace, joy. But these I have not. I have not any love of God."[65] Second, he was concerned about his lack of 'abiding joy in the Holy Ghost.' He adds, "[A]gain, joy in the holy Ghost I have not. I have now and then some starts of joy in God: but it is not that joy. For it is not abiding."[66] Third, he claimed that he was "not a Christian;" because he did not have "the fruits of the Spirit of Christ."[67]

These remarks create confusion regarding the point at which one may be called a Christian; it is especially difficult to understand what Wesley meant by

[64] Taves, 72.

[65] Wesley, Works, Bicentenniel ed., 19:30.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid., 31.

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saying he was not a Christian. Wesley explained that he "had used all the means of grace for twenty years," but he was not a Christian because he had not had "that faith which purifieth the heart."[68] Here, it seemed that supernatural experiences had awakened Wesley to the significance of sanctification, but that he felt he would not be a Christian without evidence of the Spirit's blessings in bearing fruits.

The second understanding of the therapeutic nature of the Holy Spirit in terms of physical and spiritual healing was displayed both in Wesley's earlier and later ministry. In the earlier ministry, on April 30, 1739, Wesley observed the "strong cries and tears" (see Heb. 5:7) of a woman patient whose physician was also present during Wesley's preaching at Newgate. The physician examined every symptom, "till great drops of sweat ran down her face, and all her bones shook." He was convinced it was "not fraud, nor yet any natural disorder. But when both her soul and body were healed in a moment, he acknowledges the finger of God."[69] In that account, he has the witness of a physician who knew and observed the woman's symptoms that it was no natural disorder but the supernatural finger of God working instantaneous healing. This marks a new understanding that God heals during worship.

Wesley also understood that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual healing and affirms believers' faith. On May 1, 1739, while many were still offended with the outcries, Wesley recorded a loud prayer meeting. Wesley's voice "could scarce

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., 52-53.

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be heard amidst the groanings of some of the cries of others," calling out for God to save them.[70] In that account, Wesley invited people to pray with him for deliverance. He added that God heard their voices in these ways: 1) Many received a spiritual vision of "the dawn of a great light."[71] 2) He heard a faith affirmation wherein "ten persons then began to say in faith, 'My Lord and my God.'"[72] 3) A Quaker experienced a "thunderstruck" fit; and he soon lifted his voice through intercessory prayer. His faith was affirmed and he claimed: "Now I know, thou art a prophet of God."[73] In that account, from the bold invoking of the Holy Spirit, Wesley seemed to understand the Holy Spirit not only to lead people to Christ, but also to grant spiritual vision and spiritual healing which affirmed their faith.

Some incidents occurred the following day during Wesley's house calls, illustrating his conviction that the healing was deliverance from unbelief. On May 2, one woman told Wesley in tears and "in deep anguish of spirit" that because of her disbelief, the "Spirit of God" had departed from her. Wesley prayed with her until she cried out, "He is come! He is come! I again rejoice in God my Saviour;" and gave thanks to God. Wesley described more supernatural phenomena, "[J]ust as we rose from giving thanks, another person reeled four or five steps and then dropped down. We prayed with her, and left her strongly

[70] Ibid., 53.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

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convinced of sin and earnestly groaning for deliverance."[74] Here healing is parallel to deliverance and related to confession and intercessory prayers.

On the same day, Wesley recorded John Haydon's experience of deliverance. Wesley described Haydon as a sound minded person "a man of regular life and conversation," and a pious Christian who "attended the public prayers and sacrament, and was zealous for the Church and against Dissenters of every denomination."[75] However, Haydon was skeptical of the outcries and judged the strange fits as "delusion of Christ." While he was reading Wesley's sermon on *Salvation by Faith* before dinner, he was "falling raving mad." Wesley said that he "changed colour, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly and beating himself against the ground." He seemed to gain such force that "two or three men were holding him as well as they could."[76]

When he saw Wesley, he started confessing that the fits were not a delusion, nor was his fit. In addition, he revealed that he was wrestling with a "legion of devils." His deliverance came through his confession, his faith in "Christ will cast [devils] out, and through intercessory prayers."[77] This is the clearest account describing the outburst as demon forces taking over the heart of a believer who was skeptical of God's work, and demonstrating healing as a deliverance from devils.

There was another account of Thomas Maxfield, dated May 20, 1739, in

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibd., 54.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid., 54-55.

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which "six people could scarcely hold him," and as Wesley commented that, "except John Haydon, I never saw one so torn of the evil one, evidently bound by the evil ones."[78] Here, Wesley described healing as deliverance of people from devil possession. An interesting observation is that these two cases associated skepticism in the face of supernatural signs of God with an open door for devils.

There were more supernatural experiences of healing in Wesley's ministry that were quieter. On December 20, 1742, there was another account in which Wesley joined with a few others in prayers for young Thomas Meyrick, who was expected not to live through the night. After prayer, "there was an almost immediate revival of consciousness;" and Wesley claimed that as the power of God.[79] There was another account of a pious woman who had been confined to her bed for several months, utterly unable to raise herself up. Wesley recorded that "a few of us prayed in faith. Presently she rose up, dressed herself, came down stairs, and I believe had not any further complaint."[80] In both of these accounts, the physical healing occurred in a very quiet manner.

The above illustrates Wesley's understanding that the Holy Spirit, other than convicting people to Christ, also brings physical and spiritual healing, and this work could be accompanied by fits, trances, convulsions, visions, and dreams, but could also occur quietly, affirming faith and healing the physically ill.

The third understanding of the Holy Spirit was the unpredictable nature of

[78] Ibid., 61. Later, Thomas Maxfield became an active preacher who traveled with Charles Wesley. Unfortunately, he later developed a strong opposition to Wesley.

[79] Wesley, Journal, ed. Curnock, 3: 56.

[80] Ibid., 4: 214.

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the Spirit's working to confirm God's word and to perfect Christians. Wesley first understood this through his own invoking of the Holy Spirit; and later in his ministry of consciously invoking the Spirit.

In an entry dated April 17, 1739, Wesley wrote that he had preached on the fourth chapter of Acts. Wesley and the group did a phenomenally new thing, that he never would have done as a high church priest: they "called upon God to confirm his word." He reported the consequence in which a young woman named Hannah Cornish "cried out loud, with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death."[81] The outcry turned into " a new song" and a "thanksgiving unto our God" was put in her mouth as they continued in prayer. This supernatural experience occurred when Wesley called upon God to affirm His word; the prayer seemed to have been the main transformative means that brought joy back to the woman and the group.

On April 21, Wesley recorded another outcry at Weavers' Hall:

> "a young man was suddenly seized with violent trembling all over, and in a few minutes, 'the sorrows of his heart being enlarged' (Cf. Ps. 25:16 [BCP]), sunk down to the ground. But we ceased not calling upon God, till he raised up, full of 'peace and joy in the Holy Ghost' (Rom. 14:17).[82]

In this account, Wesley carefully noted that the convulsion and fits paralleled scriptural descriptions of spiritual experience, and gave significance to the 'unceasing prayers.' It was resolved again with the joy in the Holy Spirit.

After this event, Wesley recorded supernatural phenomena more often,

[81] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 19:49.

[82] Ibid., 50.

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though each instance shows some difference. On Thursday, April 26, 1739, in his words,

> While I was preaching at Newgate on these words, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life (John 3: 36), ' I was sensibly led, without any previous design, to declare strongly and explicitly that God 'willeth all men to be thus saved (I Tim 2:4),' and to pray that if this were not the truth of God, he would not suffer the blind to go out of the way; but if it were, he would bear witness to his Word. Immediately one and another sunk to the earth: they dropped on every side thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf, and he turned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also, and he spoke peace unto her soul.[83]

Here, Wesley demonstrated that he was led to call upon God as witness to the Scripture, especially to the truth that "God willeth all men to be thus saved," indicating the scriptural origin of that doctrine.

Taves explains that "crying out loud or falling to the ground was understood as confirmation of Scripture or doctrine."[84] The incidence of Hannah Cornish, followed by three others, as Taves points out, constituted for Wesley, "living witnesses –whose experiences confirmed God's word."[85] It was the same with the incidence of April 26, in which Wesley called upon God to "bear witness to the truth of his repudiation of the Calvinist doctrine of predestination."[86] The same is affirmed when men and women immediately fell into fits, as though 'thunderstruck,' after he prayed that "if this were not the truth of God, he would

[83] Ibid., 51. The diary indicates that one of these women was Ann ('Nanny') Davis, who became one of Charles Wesley's most intimate friends in Bristol. He wrote a hymn upon her death, Nov. 5, 1775. The Journal of the Rev. Charles Wesley, ed. Thomas Jackson (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book-Room, 1849), 2: 376-77.

[84] Taves, 72.

[85] Ibid., 73.

[86] Ibid.

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not suffer the blind to go out of the way; but if it were, he would bear witness to his Word." [87] This not only demonstrates Wesley's faith in the Word of God, but also that he began to understand that spiritual awakenings or supernatural experiences occurred by invitation from God (led by God) and by inviting the Spirit of Christ to bear witness.

Following the above samples, Wesley began to grasp some connection with the Holy Spirit. First, the whole group, or at least Wesley, seemed to know that unceasing prayer to God would help persons respond to the Holy Spirit. Second, these outcries, fits and convulsions occurred suddenly and unpredictably, after which the people responded to the group's prayers with a peaceful rest in the Spirit. Third, later in April, Wesley discovered that by inviting God to witness his word and doctrines, people responded with vivid and elaborate bodily expressions of their spiritual state. Fourth, Wesley became aware that the seeds of spiritual awakening are both an invitation from God and a human invitation to God to witness his Word through their prayers. He saw that joy in the Spirit, healing and unity in praise followed such experiences.

Wesley later integrated the invitation of the Holy Spirit in his hymns. I can trace in the 1780 *Collection of Hymns* the many examples of inviting God's Spirit, understood as a desired experience as well as a way to awaken souls. These hymns were written to invite the Holy Spirit in different occasions. Hymn 85 reads,

> Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire,
> Let us thine influence prove,
> Source of the old prophetic fire,

[87] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 19: 51.

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Fountain of life and love.
Come, Holy Ghost (for moved by thee
The prophets wrote and spoke);
Unlock the truth, thyself the key,
Unseal the sacred book.[88]

The above hymn was an invitation for awakening the people to the Spirit of God before reading the Scriptures. A common baptismal prayer, Hymn 465:13-16, reveals a trinitarian understanding of God:

Father, all thy love reveal!
Jesus, all thy name impart!
Holy Ghost, renew and dwell
For ever in his heart! [89]

From these examples, we see that Wesley and his brother Charles, who wrote most of the hymns for Methodists, understood that the Holy Spirit works in various forms, mostly to heal and affirm faith, individually and collectively. The church can pray for the Spirit to lead people into perfection and holiness.

Quietism

Experience of the Holy Spirit can lead to Quietism or resistance to Quietism. This section examines the stillness controversy that led to John Wesley's split with the Moravians and the Fetter Lane Society. This will clarify his understanding of the Holy Spirit as active grace in perfecting Christian faith and Christian living. According to Albert Outler, this understanding sharpened Wesley's theology of the connection between justification and sanctification,

[88] Franz Hildebrandt and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds., A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodist, vol. 7 of The Works of John Wesley, Bicentennial ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 185.

[89] Ibid., 7: 648.

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perfection as inward and outward holiness, and the importance of understanding humans as ethical agents.[90]

As we have discussed, Wesley was drawn to the Moravians' doctrine of the assurance of faith, which he witnessed both in Spangenberg and Peter Böhler. Even before his Aldersgate experience, Wesley, along with Böhler, organized such Anglican-Moravian groups as the Fetter Lane Society, established on May 1, 1738.[91] Robert Tuttle explains that at that time, Wesley had not fully understood the Moravian's doctrine of mystical piety or Quietism; but desired to "substitute his own internal work-righteousness for the Moravian faith in Christ."[92] Tuttle says that Wesley just overreacted to the Moravian doctrine of justification by faith, based on his assumption that assurance could be achieved instantaneously, which he learned did not occur in the initial stages.[93]

Wesley began to the grasp Moravian doctrine of justification by faith through the stillness controversy that surfaced with the Moravians between November 1739 and July 1740.[94] This "stillness controversy" was precipitated by Philip Henry Molther, who had recently arrived from Hermhut, Germany; he convinced many in the Fetter Lane Society that they did not have true faith. He

[90] Outler, John Wesely, 30.

[91] Ibid., 353; and Wesley Journal in May 1, 1738.

[92] Tuttle, 221.

[93] Ibid., 222-23. Tuttle explains in detail in the section that for the mystic "there was no such assurance and no sensible comfort from God for those could not master the dark night of the soul."

[94] Outler, John Wesley, 353-354. This period only referred to Wesley final split Fetter Lane Society. Outler mentioned that this controversy had caused Wesley exchange of pamphlet polemics over a span of two decades.

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taught them that true faith could be attained only through "stillness" before the Lord; thus they should refrain from all means of grace, especially the Lord's Supper, until they had true faith in Christ. He argued that there is no other means of grace but Christ; and that the ordinances are not means of grace.[95]

Wesley examined this teaching very closely with Molther and later with Moravian Bishop, Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf. From these conversations with Molther, Wesley learnt that Molther advocated this spiritual discipline of "waiting upon the Lord" as the necessary prelude to *sola fide*; and it canceled out all outward works of piety and mercy. Molther's concept of *sola fide* meant "a sure confidence of the love of God to them," and he persisted in teaching that the only way to attain it is to wait for Christ and be "still."[96] For Molther, being still literally meant performing no outward works, including the Anglican means of grace: going to church, communication, fasting, reading Scripture, private prayer, temporal good works, and even spiritual good works.[97] In addition, Wesley discovered that for Molther, there are no degrees of faith between young and old; there is no weak faith--one either has faith or not. This caused the Society much confusion and fear.[98] Later, Wesley understood that the Moravian doctrine of salvation was a reaction to law and works, and was literally connected with

[95] Wesley, Works, Jackson ed., 1:247; and Journal, Curnock ed., 2:312-13.

[96] Wesley, Works, Jackson ed., 1: 256-259; Journal, Curnock ed., 2: 328-31; Outler, John Wesley, 356-358.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

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Luther's "no works, no law, and no commandment."[99]

From his conversation with Count Zinzendorf, Wesley probed his suspicion of their doctrine of Christian perfection, especially how they understood the nature of the Holy Spirit, and he reflected upon how he understood the work of the Holy Spirit. For Zinzendorf, there is "no inherent perfection in this life," and "Christ is our only perfection. Whoever affirms inherent perfection denies Christ."[100] Wesley answered, "But I truly believe that it is Christ's own Spirit that works in true Christians to achieve their perfection."[101] Zinzendorf denied the usefulness of any work toward holiness and growth in God's love; he affirmed only free grace.[102] However, Wesley saw this total dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit as antinomianism, the avoidance of any active spiritual nurture and of the human responsibility of doing good. Wesley thought Moravian Quietism to be in conformity to "mystic theory," "unsupported by Scripture," and believed that it "destroyed brotherly love and avoiding the taking up the cross."[103]

From the above dialogue between Wesley and Moravian beliefs, I can draw Wesley's three basic understandings of the Holy Spirit. First, the Holy Spirit actively works in Christian life to achieve perfection and holiness. In this, he diverged from the Moravian doctrine of Christian perfection. Assurance of

[99] Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 2:467; Outler, John Wesley, 366.

[100] Outler, John Wesley, 369. Only Outler's edition has the translation of the German conversation.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid., 370-71.

[103] Ibid., 375-76; Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 2: 495-500.

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salvation could be attained from the belief that God's grace is witnessed in Christian hearts and lives. Wesley understood Christian perfection to mean that people would love God with their hearts and love their neighbors with actions. Holiness is to be attained not through passive waiting on the Holy Spirit's guidance, but in active living the Christian life of love. Albert Outler explains that Wesley finally found a "correlation between justification and sanctification." He explains further that, for Wesley, "faith alone is sole ground of pardon and reconciliation that no merit of any sort whatever can be linked to man's ultimate concern.--- At the same time, he was equally insistent that the righteousness of faith is designed by God to promote actual righteousness in Christian living."[104] Christian faith is thus personal and social, and the goal of Christian life is perfection in loving.

Wesley's second understanding of the Holy Spirit comes from his resistance to Quietism. He insisted that the Spirit perfects Christians through all of God's ordinances; perfection is not restricted to waiting quietly in prayer, but is attained by actively using all means of grace. Wesley argued in detail that all God's ordinances are means for believers to receive grace as ordained by God.[105] Here, Wesley advocated the importance of all spiritual practices in grounding Christian faith. He cautioned against passive waiting on the Holy Spirit in prayer, instead he urged using Scripture and all means of grace, including Christian living and service.

[104] Outler, John Wesely, 30.

[105] Ibid., 363-67; and Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 2: 359-62.

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Wesley's third understanding of the Holy Spirit defines sanctification not as inward holiness alone, but also as outward holiness. Martin Schmidt indicates that, as a result of the stillness controversy, Wesley declared that, "the life of the perfected Christian was not a proof of the existence of God, but a sacrifice continually offered up to Him."[106] When Fetter Lane member Betty Bush wanted to share with Wesley her private revelation and speculative ideas, Wesley strongly rejected her and her companions; he claimed that he would "settle for the Bible and practical Christianity," which was after godliness.[107] What Wesley rejected was not Betty Bush but the spiritual compliance, personal cult, and what Schmidt called learning for "arrogant self-admiration" that rejects basic Christian responsibility.[108]

Richard Heitzenrater explains that Wesley's dispute with the Moravians was based on more than stillness but their closed religion and decision making around Molther, which contradicted his desire for "open decision making."[109] To counter the antinomianism of the Moravians, Wesley's later directives to the Foundery Society insisted on the basic principles that each member was to do no harm, to do good and to use all means of grace.[110]

In sum, Wesley understood that the Holy Spirit actively works toward

[106] Martin Schmidt, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, Vol. 2 of John Wesley's life Mission, Part II, trans. Norman P. Goldhawk (New York: Abinndon Press, 1973), 99.

[107] Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 2:381-82.

[108] Schmidt, 99.

[109] Richard Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 108.

[110] Ibid., 107. This Foundery Society was founded around mid-April of 1741, three months before the final split with the Fetter Lane Society.

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Christian perfection, works through all means of grace, and can be witnessed through inward and social holiness. Nehemiah Curnock critiqued Wesley's drift from the Moravians as a positive step, saying "Methodism was finally cut adrift from the beautiful, dreaming, but wholly impracticable mysticism of German Quietism as interpreted by Molther and Böhler and misinterpreted by Bray and Taylor and Simpson."[111] Did Wesley actually drift away from the Moravian mystic theory? Tuttle remarks that, even though Wesley replaced "true mystic spirit" with "the social factor" in Methodist class meetings, Wesley maintained a "tarrying and spiritual quiet" emphasis as reflected in his hymns.[112] Tuttle concluded that Wesley held a consistent teaching of holiness that was ethical, moral, and evangelical; and the "absolute supremacy of love for God and neighbor never wavers."[113] However, I will add that, for Wesley, the process of holiness is also sacramentally based on his intentional invitation of the Holy Spirit. He understood that the Spirit works actively in worship, holding a mystical presence in human hearts, and Christians are yet to learn to "be quiet" before God's Spirit.

Proclamation

John Wesley also believed that the Holy Spirit could shape proclamation. This section examines Wesley's understanding of how the Holy Spirit shaped proclamation -- his own and that of the Methodist preachers -- and also shaped the Methodist movement. This reflection will reveal Wesley's understanding of the

[111] Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 2:500n.

[112] Tuttle, 333. One example is "Bid my quiet spirit hear."

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Holy Spirit as the Master teacher and creator of the Methodist movement.

One basic determining factor needs to be defined before we begin the exploration. For Wesley, the awareness and realization of the Holy Spirit's working in revivals was inseparable from the ways in which Wesley changed his context, method, content, and direction for proclamation. This awareness was not just about Wesley's inward spiritual awakenings, but it guided him to launch the Methodist movement. He then awakened to see the crowd that was hungry for the proclamation of the Gospel, what messages would best present the Gospel, and what structure needed to be implemented to provide spiritual nurture and pastoral care to the Methodists who were converted.

The first shift that Wesley made in April 1, 1739, was to the field preaching method, whereby he began to understand that the gospel could be preached outside the walls of the church; and that God's work was not restricted to physical contexts. This field preaching was open-air preaching, not necessarily restricted to fields but any open site where people might gather and the preacher could be heard. That afternoon, Wesley saw Whitefield preach on Rose Green to about thirty thousand people, and the following afternoon, Wesley "submitted to be more veil" by proclaiming outdoors. He preached to about three thousand people.[114] That was a remarkable change, and Wesley understood he had to submit to the Spirit's guidance. He confessed that " having been all my life so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought

[113] Ibid., 344.

[114] Wesley, Journal, Curnock ed., 2: 172. For Wesley, to be more veil also led to inviting witness stories in his sermons instead of just directly reading the sermons.

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the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."[115]

Wesley's shift to proclaim outdoors later extended to a graveyard, market square, and mine pits. His journal reports that, in the first month in the Bristol, the attendance totaled up to 47, 500, with an average of 3,000 per occasion.[116] This new outdoor proclamation of the gospel inspired many other Methodist preachers. Charles Wesley liked this new avenue of field preaching, and later urged at the Conference in 1746, "Have we not limited field preaching too much?--We cannot expect the wanderers from God to seek us. It is our part to go and seek them."[117] There, Charles Wesley was awakened by the Holy Spirit to realize that the mission field was not in the church, but wherever people were. John Wesley later highlighted to John Smith his conviction of the Spirit's guidance that "I did far more good to [parishioners in Lincolnshire] by preaching three days on my father's tomb than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit."[118] Wesley further explained that this field preaching and his advocacy of the itinerant evangelist had been the will of God because God had blessed the work.[119]

The second shift reflects more of Wesley's openness to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit for conviction of sins and healing. It was a new awakening for

[115] Ibid., 167.

[116] Heitzenrater, Wesely and the People called Methodists, 99-100. In his texts, Heitzenrater described how the outdoor areas were proven then to be the good locations to reach out to a huge crowd.

[117] Minutes of the United Methodist Conferences, Vol. 1, 1744-1798 (London: Mason, 1862), 37.

[118] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26: 237.

[119] Ibid.

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Wesley, that God's work is not limited in the kinds of transformations taking place in people lives. In his journal, Wesley described some of the effects on people when he invited the Holy Spirit to confirm God's word. Those effects have been mentioned in an earlier section of this paper such as: "people were thunderstruck," "wounded by the sword of the Spirit," "seized with strong pain," "cut to the heart," "sunk to the earth," "falling into fits, trances, convulsion," and "receiving spiritual visions."[120] Wesley was convinced that those outward signs often accompanied the inner work of God, and preachers should welcome God's spirit to confirm their preaching.

Wesley discussed this matter with his fellow pioneer revivalist George Whitefield, who disagreed with Wesley. Wesley recorded that God surprised Whitefield in July 7, 1739. When Whitefield invited "sinners to believe in Christ," they witnessed supernatural phenomena in the revival:

> [F]our persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God with strong cries and tears.[121]

Wesley commented, "I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth him."[122] This remark reflects Wesley's understanding that God's work is not restricted to particular forms. It also demonstrated Wesley's divergence from Whitefield, in terms of revival methods that are open to God's Spirit for the conviction and healing of believers.

[120] Wesley, Works, Bicenetennial ed., mostly in volume 19.

[121] Wesley, Works, Bicenetennial ed., 19:79.

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The third shift involves Wesley's awareness of what messages to preach that would allow outward signs of God, new birth and changes to emerge in sinner's lives. In this shift, Wesley acknowledged the Holy Spirit as shaping the content of his preaching; likewise, Wesley thought that he was grasping the secret of the proclamation of the Gospel.

According to Martin Schmidt, Wesley recognized four periods of his preaching activity. The first period was from 1725-1729, when Wesley preached a lot, but without much fruit. The reason was obvious, because he preached neither repentance nor belief in the Gospel.[123] The second period was from 1729-1734, when Wesley placed more emphasis on repentance but still saw little fruit. The third period was in the years of 1734-1738, when faith and assurance in Jesus Christ became his theme, and he saw more fruits. The fourth period was after 1738, when Wesley "spoke continually of Jesus Christ, and made him the first and last subject of his preaching;" and the response was overwhelming.[124] From the previous discussion, it was also during the third and fourth periods that Wesley had his most profound personal experiences of the Holy Spirit and was willing to submit to the Spirit's guidance in his proclamation. It is at this period, Wesley understood that the Holy Spirit convicts sins, heals believers, and awakens sinners when Wesley called upon the Holy Spirit to witness God's word in his proclamation. The combination of invoking the Holy Spirit and preaching

[122] Ibid.

[123] Schmidt, Vol. 2, Part I, 192.

[124] Ibid. See John Telford, Letters of John Wesley, 8 vols. (London: Epworth Press, 1931), 2: 264ff.

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Jesus Christ started the fire within the Methodist movement.

Wesley did not stop at preaching justification, which calls people to repent and return to Jesus Christ. According to the Methodist minutes of the Conference from 1744-1750, Wesley guided the Methodist preachers to preach three main categories of sermons, which he later published in three volumes. The first group of sermons was primarily upon faith, justification, and assurance.[125] The second group of sermons, which was published in 1748, was more on regeneration and sanctification, and the assumption that the Christian life can be nurtured.[126] The third group of sermons was more on the relationship between the "law" and "faith," and includes Wesley's better known sermons on Christian perfection.[127] Wesley further developed the basic content of proclamation, reducing it to one question: What it means to preach Christ?[128] According to Wesley, to preach both the law and the gospel, "this is the scriptural way, the Methodist way, the true way."[129] This list reflects Wesley's understanding that true proclamation includes bringing Christ to people, teaching justification, perfection, law, and faith. It involves teaching how to love God and all people as way of life, and that the Spirit of God will perfect Christians.

The fourth shift came with Wesley's understanding that the proclamation

[125] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 4: 393; and also Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 177.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid., 178.

[128] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26: 482-89.

[129] Ibid., 488-89.

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of the Gospel was not an end. The revival awakened him to the need for spiritual nurture and pastoral care. Martin Schdmidt called Wesley's mission basically a preaching movement, "strongly based on biblical and dogmatic principles," and developing gradually into the Methodist structure of band, class, society, itinerant preaching, lay preachers, and later Methodist Conferences.[130] Heitzenrater points out that it was urgent and evident for Wesley to build a structure for nurture and mission in the formation of societies. Wesley had tried preaching without forming societies and "the results were disastrous;" there were lots of backsliding souls, no instructions given to lay preachers and no building up of the crowd.[131] Thus, the experience of the Holy Spirit shaped Wesley to be accountable in his proclamation, and to be intentional in creating a structure for spiritual nurture, pastoral care, and connection.

Though there were always suspicions and persecutions of Wesley and the Methodist field proclamation, the fire of revival spread. Charles Wesley affirmed that God kindled the fire of revival. He said,

> For one preacher they cut off, twenty sprung up. Neither persuasions not threatening, flattery nor violence, dungeons or suffering of various kinds, can conquer them. Many waters cannot quench this little spark which the Lord hath kindled, neither shall the floods of persecution drown it.[132]

In short, there are no limits and no challenges too difficult for God's work through the Holy Spirit. When Christ is the main message, there is an invitation to the Holy Spirit to change people's lives and an openness to provide spiritual

[130] Schmidt, pt.1, 117, and 96-126.

[131] Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 165.

[132] Charles Wesley, Journal, ed. Thomas Jackson, 1:423.

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nurture, as well as pastoral care without restrictions of context and form. The church today will grasp the essence of Wesley's spiritual revival in its proclamation.

Enthusiasm and Challenge of Discernment

The most difficult challenges in understanding the Holy Spirit are to distinguish between true Christian experience and mere enthusiasm and to discern the witness of the Holy Spirit. This section examines charges against Wesley's Methodism as mere enthusiasm. It explores: 1) how Wesley understood true Christian experience as marked by witness of the Spirit; 2) the challenges of this discernment; and 3) Wesley's efforts to live a life directed by the Holy Spirit.

Charges of enthusiasm dogged Wesley beginning with his Holy Club in the 1730s, "reminiscent of the Puritan emphasis upon godliness," later labeled as "enthusiasts" or "supererogation men."[133] After1739 it served as a negative term that described Methodists as "rapturous enthusiasts, preaching up unaccountable sensations, violent emotions, and sudden changes; boasting of immediate inspirations, and laying a blasphemous claim to greater miracles than ever were wrought and even by Christ Himself."[134] In Bishop Gibson's nine counts of arraignment of the Methodists as enthusiasts, the Methodists were publicly portrayed as fanatics, as dissenters; and with distant ecclesiastical self-identity.[135]

[133] Schmidt, 1:100.

[134] Edward H. Sugden, ed., John Wesley's Fifty-Three Sermons (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 461. These are Sugden's editorial notes in Wesley's sermon on "The Nature of Enthusiasm." Those were remarks from Wesley's Anglican Clergy Rev. Charles Wheatley.

[135] Ibid. The nine counts were: 1, their claims to extraordinary communication from God; 2, to a special mission; 3, to divine inspiration; 4, to divine power in their preaching; 5, to the gift

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From these accusations, Wesley's doctrine of assurance, in particular the doctrine of the witness of the Holy Spirit in Christian experience, was being labeled as enthusiasm, and associated with radical Puritans and Pietists.[136] Wesley was compelled to defend Methodism from this theological accusation.

According to Ann Taves' analysis of the arguments of Albert Outler and Stephen Gunter, "Wesley's witness of the Spirit was linked to the presence of a 'spiritual sense' in the spiritual, but not the natural man."[137] She explains that, for Wesley, the presence of this spiritual sense was due to the new birth experience that "enabled converts to intuitively apprehend the witness of the Spirit with their spirit that they were children of God."[138] To avoid "the natural senses caught up in their own vivid imaginings (enthusiasm),"[139] Wesley argued that the testimony of the Spirit could not be separated from the fruits of the Spirit, which are peace, joy and love.[140] According to this logic, the new birth experience initiated by the Spirit became the pre-requisite of a spiritual sense; and the witness of the Spirit as reflected by the fruits of the Spirit would distinguish one from enthusiasm, which

of the Holy Spirit; 6, to prophecy; 7, to be equals of the apostles and even of Christ; 8, to be the preachers of a new gospel; 9, to use extraordinary method of teaching.

[136] Taves, 54; and Schmidt, 1:100. Taves has especially pointed out that Wesley was directly influenced by "the radical wing of Pietism, specifically the Moravians, but perceptions of Wesley were heavily influenced by the Puritan, especially Quaker[.]" Martin Schmidt had also pointed out the Puritan influence of inward witness on Wesley in Wesley's Holy Club's experience.

[137] Taves, 54.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Wesley, "The Witness of the Spirit; Discourse II," in Albert Outler, John Wesley, ed., 209-20.

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Wesley later defended as imagination.[141]

From this logic of understanding of the Holy Spirit, there were several impossibilities for natural men to distinguish the spiritual experience, not to consider the difficulties for Christians also. Ann Taves lists these three impossibilities within Wesley's logic, which assumes that "natural man" had no basis on which to "distinguish between Christian experience and enthusiasm."[142] The first claim was that no "natural man" could understand the distinction, as it relied on the new birth experience, and that "if one could not see the distinction, one by definition had not had the experience."[143] The second claim was the difficulty for the formalists who relied only on testimony from the Scripture to distinguish between inward and outward religion.[144] The third claim was the difficulty for modern scholars to "find any discernible difference between what Wesley called true Christian experience and what he and others called enthusiasm."[145] Taves concludes that, according to Wesley, "natural men were trapped in natural senses," given the circularity of the logic, unable to see any distinction between true Christian experience and enthusiasm.[146]

According to Wesley, not even Christians were able to distinguish true

[141] Wesley, "The Nature of Enthusiasm," in Sugden, ed., Fifty Three Sermons, ibid., 461-71. In this sermon, Wesley countered the accusation of enthusiasm by defining enthusiasm as merely four sorts of imagination, disorder in the mind that was based on wrong premises.

[142] Taves., 54.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid., 55.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Ibid., 54-55.

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Christian experience and enthusiasm. In his second sermon on the witness of the Spirit, Wesley displayed his circular argument again. On one hand, he believed that "experience is not sufficient to prove a doctrine which is not founded on Scripture;" but only through new birth and direct and indirect witness of the Spirit.[147] On the other hand, he pointed out the intrinsic difficulty of perceiving the Holy Spirit. He illustrated at least two circumstances in which even Christians may not perceive the Holy Spirit. One is when the direct witness was first given; and the other, although not being able to perceive it, one was content with "being in the favour of God."[148] Here Wesley described an epistemological shift from being able to understand the Holy Spirit to walking in consciousness and keeping "filial confidence in God without the direct witness" of the human spirit.[149]

Within this understanding, Wesley also illustrated the challenge of discernment of spiritual knowledge, in particular, what constitute marks of the Holy Spirit. Using a similar argument, Wesley divided knowledge into two kinds: natural perception and spiritual perception. For Wesley, natural men needed to "be awakened" in order to be spiritually discerning.[150] This understanding illustrates again that the new birth or conversion experience is also the prerequisite experience for discernment. It also emphasizes the importance of spiritual awakening in Christian nurture and pastoral care.

The trickiest challenge of discernment, for Wesley, is how can one secure

[147] Wesley, "The Witness of the Spirit," in Outler, ed., John Wesley, 216.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid., 217-18.

[150] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 1: 276.

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one's witness of the Spirit from the delusion of the devil and determine it to be the mark of the Holy Spirit. Throughout his works and teaching, Wesley provided some guidelines to aid believers in the challenge to follow the Spirit's direction. Wesley called Scripture a "joint testimony" with marks of Christian experience such as repentance, and the fruits of the Holy Spirit (peace, joy, love, patience, meekness, gentleness and long suffering).[151] In addition, supernatural experience played an important role in Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit but there was also a difficulty in interpreting natural phenomena. Ann Taves points out two helpful and fundamental points to comprehend Wesley's understanding of the witness of the Spirit. First, "there were no sure signs or evidence of salvation and second, that the witness of the Spirit (experience) must be tested by the fruits of the Spirit."[152] These two points serve as a measuring stick to follow Wesley's basic guidelines for discernment.

In terms of lack of a sure sign or evidence of salvation, Wesley pointed out to Elizabeth Hutton in 1744: "Dreams and visions were never allowed by us to be certain marks of adoption---Neither did we ever allow the falling into fits to be a certain mark. Yet we believe the Spirit of God, sharply convincing the soul of sin, may occasion the bodily strength to fail."[153] Here, Wesley warned Hutton not to rely on specific signs and forms of God's witness because there were no definite signs of salvation; the Spirit's unpredictably works in Christians. Taves

[151] Taves, 52.

[152] Taves, 53.

[153] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26:113; and Taves, 53.

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explains that "dreams, visions and involuntary movements might be marks of adoption," or "simply be marks of enthusiasm."[154] Wesley's advice was not to rely on emotions because not all of God's works are dramatic; sometimes "nature mixed with grace and also Satan likewise mimicked this work of God in order to discredit the whole work."[155] In terms of the test of the witness of the Spirit, Wesley emphasized a transformation in one's life, summed up in his phrase to his brother Samuel, "till then many ways wicked; from that time holy, just and good."[156]

Taves points out that because Wesley viewed the experience (the witness of the Spirit) to be always "in dynamic relationship with practice (the practice of the Spirit)," Methodism was able to avoid the extremes of formalism and enthusiasm.[157] Wesley has therefore helped Christians maintain a balance between seeking an inward experience of the Spirit and living the outward fruits of the Spirit in their lives.

In Wesley's life and ministry, he continued to face challenges of his limited ability to discern whether the outward signs were supernatural works of God or human doings; whether he had downplayed supernatural experience. In his Journal, he discussed the challenge. He confessed, "I believe that no man living has skill enough to determine" the witness of the Spirit.[158] He added that,

[154] Taves, 53.

[155] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 21: 234; and 18: 48-49; and Taves, 57.

[156] Wesley, ibid., 19: 59-60.

[157] Taves, 53.

[158] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26: 113.

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due to lack of faith and doubts, God "had withdrawn his Spirit," but with confession, the outward manifestations may still follow.[159] This confession reveals the difficulty in discernment; but it also reveals that, for Wesley, faith and confession will invite God's manifestations. Twenty years later, Wesley confessed that perhaps he downplayed the significance of these in awakening people to spiritual experience. In his words, he said,

> November 25, 1759- I observed a remarkable difference since I was here before—None now were in trances, none cried out, none fell down or were convulsed. Only some trembled exceedingly; a low murmur was heard. And many were refreshed with the 'multitude of peace.' The danger was to regard extraordinary circumstances too much, such as outcries,---- Perhaps the danger is to regard too little, to condemn them altogether, to imagine they had nothing of God in them and were an hindrance to his work.[160]

Here, Wesley seemed disappointed that he had not been persistent enough to offer further encouragement. He had been limited by his polemic defense of Methodism against the charge of fanaticism. In trying to disassociate with enthusiasm–which implied a mentally disordered imagination--he did not consistently nurture openness to the Spirit's manifestations and teachings.

Within this process of self-examination, Wesley revealed the turmoil of the dark night of his soul, even displaying his Christian experience and journey to triumph in Methodism. A letter to his brother on June 1766 reads:

> In one of my last, I was saying I do not feel the wrath of God abiding on me; nor can I believe it does. And yet (this is the mystery), I do not love God. I never did. Therefore I never believed, in the Christian sense of the

[159] Ibid. This citation derived from Taves' observation.

[160] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 21: 234.

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> word. Therefore I am only an honest heathen, a proselyte of the Temple, one of the [God-fearers]. And yet, to be so employed by God!---I have no direct witness (I do not say, that I am a child of God, but) of anything invisible or eternal.[161]

This reflects Wesley's spiritual depression, or humility, struggling between the limitations of reason and his theology of grace. He struggled with the lack of assurance and to understand why God would still employ him. Heitzenrater explains that Wesley's self-examination was his "passage to higher level of spiritual experience," which was "to consider God's activity in other persons as an important means of his perceiving God's providence and God's will;" and "God's presence in his life did not always depend upon his perception of it."[162] He furnishes the evidence in Wesley's subsequent paragraph:

> And yet I dare not preach otherwise than I do, either concerning faith, or love, or justification, or perfection. And yet I find rather an increase than a decrease of zeal for the whole work of God and every part of it. –I know not how, that I can't stand still. I want all the world to come to [what I do not know].[163]

In this statement, Wesley revealed his determination to preach faith, love, and perfection despite his limitation in understanding and lack of constant direct witness of the Spirit.

In short, Wesley demonstrated his consistency to guard against enthusiasm by not relying on just his own experience, but also on other people's experience of God or their fruits of the Spirit, and on reason, Scripture and outward holiness to manifest love. His struggle depicted the limitation of human reasoning and

[161] Wesley, Letters, Telford ed., 5:16.

[162] Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 225.

[163] Wesley, Letters, Telford ed., 5:16; and Heitzenrater, ibid., 225. The bracket form was Heitzenrater's adjustment.

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experience of the Holy Spirit, and his tendency to leave room for doubts as well as all outward supernatural works of God.

Importance of Spiritual Practices

This section examines John Wesley's understanding of the significance of spiritual practices for spiritual nurture and pastoral care. It draws from the above discussions and also from his teaching in sermons. The details of what spiritual practices are necessary for spiritual awakening will be elaborated in Chapter 6.

From the above examination, the seed for Wesley's spiritual awakening can be seen as his openness and invitation of the experience of God's Spirit in his private devotion, preaching, prayers, reading of the Scripture, and attending to all means of grace. Many of the unexplored and downplayed experiences of the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit need to be in the center of our education again. Wesley's advocacy of religious practices needs to be spelled out as guidelines for Spirit-centered education. It is through reclaiming Wesley's awareness of the importance of the awakening felt experience, supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit, change of heart and life, and witness of the spirit inward and outward, that we can expect to see life growing out of these seeds.

In terms of Wesley's interpretation of the importance of spiritual practices according to his understanding of the awakening nature of Holy Spirit, I discover five major points of significance for spiritual practices as means to experience grace in spiritual awakenings.

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First, through spiritual practices, the Spirit of God awakens people to their senses to feel the indwelling presence of God. In addition, attending to all means of grace, which is Wesley's term for spiritual practices, guards against the extreme mysticism found in Moravian Quietism as discussed earlier. Wesley said, "all things are possible to him that thus believeth,--the eyes of his understanding being enlightened,--He feels what is the exceeding greatness of His Spirit,--by His Spirit which dwelt in us."[164] These remarks reflect that neither Christians nor churches plant seeds for spiritual awakening; it is the Spirit of God who awakens people and restores their sensitivity to the indwelling presence of God. For Wesley, this is clear; Christians' spiritual awakening enables them to believe in the experience of the Spirit indwelling in believers. However, Christians are not to wait upon God through being still, using only prayer and dispensing with worship, sacrament, and human responsibility for neighbors (discussed earlier in relation to the stillness controversy).

Second, spiritual practices that nurture such awakening will affirm faith; as Wesley said, it leads to the awareness of "both a supernatural evidence of God and of the things of God, a kind of spiritual sight exhibited to the soul, and a supernatural sight or perception thereof."[165] These insights connect spiritual awakening to faith and new birth wherein spiritual experiences "are perceivable only through spiritual sense which in him [the natural man] was never yet

[164] Wesley, "The Circumcision of the Heart," Works, Bicentennial ed., 1: 398, 405. As Albert Outler pointed out, in this section I.7, Wesley added (in 1748) a personal confession after the Aldersgate Experience. Thus we can see better his awakening experience.

[165] Wesley, "The Scriptural Way of Salvation," Works, Bicentennial ed., 2: 160.

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awakened."[166] It will link spiritual experiences as perceptible inspiration through which believers experience salvation such that the Spirit of God can "fill us with righteousness, peace, and joy, and with love to him and all mankind—as clearly as he does the light of the sun—and none is a true Christian till he experience it."[167] Spiritual experiences of such inspiration aim towards awakening one to the experience of an effable love for God and humankind.

Third, using all means of grace as advocated by Wesley will help Christians to maintain a balance between inward experience and living outward holiness. It guards against enthusiasm that expects to "attain the end without using the means."[168] It will encourage Christians not just to assume an understanding of Scripture without reading it. It will also encourage Christians to thoughtful reflection and to use all means of help for social holiness. It is what Wesley described as connecting repentance to the fruits of the Holy Spirit, or what he called the "joint testimony of God's Spirit and our Spirit."[169] It is what Taves means when she points out that Wesley viewed the Christian experience in dynamic relationship with practice: "Methodism was able to avoid the extremes of formalism and enthusiasm."[170] Wesley has therefore helped Christians maintain a balance between seeking an inward experience of the Spirit and living the outward fruits of the Spirit in their lives.

[166] Taves, 52 as she cited Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 1:402.

[167] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26:182.

[168] Wesley, "The Nature of Enthusiasm," in Sugden, ed., Fifty Three Sermons, 473-74.

[169] Wesley, "Witness of the Spirit, I," Works, Bicentennial ed., 1:277-78.

[170] Taves, 53.

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Fourth, Spiritual practices that awaken people to God's enabling presence take Christians to the road of sanctification. As Wesley said, we are "enabled by the Spirit to mortify our evil nature" and "as we are more and more dead to sin, we are more and more alive to God."[171] Here, spiritual awakening is described as the work of the Holy Spirit awakening us to "the image of God in us," crafting a true holiness in a spiritual journey, as Wesley later articulated in his *Thoughts upon Methodism.*[172] With this understanding, teaching spiritual awakening is to awaken believers to the mind of Christ or the image of God and to lead them on the journey of Godliness and holiness.

Fifth, spiritual practices have the potential to recover the peculiar blessings of the Holy Spirit and primitive Christianity when God's children search the Scriptures, and live a life of Scriptural holiness and godliness. Wesley claimed that this evangelical truth "has been recovered, which had been for many years well nigh lost and forgotten."[173] The ultimate ends of spiritual awakening are not just about awakening people to the Spirit, but recovering the primitive Christianity through which practical divinity can build in people a deep relationship with the Trinitarian God – Father (Creator), Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit -- and rekindling religious passion for mission and holiness of living.

[171] Wesley, "The Scriptural Way of Salvation," Works, Bicentennial ed., 2:160.

[172] Rupert E. Davies, ed., The Methodist Societies: History, Nature and Design, vol. 9 of The Works of John Wesley,[hereafter Bicentennial ed., 9] (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 527. In Wesley's "Thought upon Methodism," written in 1786, Wesley described religion as "inward principle," "the renewal of the soul after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness; which can never be wrought in us by the power of the Holy Ghost."

[173] Wesley, "Witness of the Spirit, II," Works, Bicentennial ed., 1:285-86.

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In terms of common means for such awakening experiences, Wesley lists tragedies, natural disasters, awakening sermons, or perhaps a direct conviction by the Holy Spirit.[174] What does this awakening involve? Randy Maddox answers that one's apathy must be removed. He says, "We must be convinced of the sinfulness of our words, deeds, and tempers, and of our own helplessness to transform any of these."[175] However, as evidenced by Wesley's difficulty in experiencing faith, it clearly was not apathy alone. By all indications, he was pious and engaged in a serious search of holiness. Drawing from his yearning experiences and strict disciplines, he was influenced by his family religious upbringing, mission, strict disciplines, and God's invitation and human invitations to the Spirit.

Wesley valued spiritual practices. He particularly emphasized reading and praying. In a letter to one of his preachers, he said:

> Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is your life; there is no other way: else you will be a trifler all your days, and a pretty superficial preacher. Do justice to your own soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer. Take up your cross, and be a Christian all together.[176]

In addition, Wesley believed in attending to the spiritual practices that lead to spiritual awakening. In his view, this is a sure way to invite the Spirit to restore holiness to a humanity that has lost it. As Hymn 159 reads:

> Most pitiful Spirit of grace,
> Relieve me again, and restore,
> My Spirit in holiness raise,

[174] Maddox, Responsible Grace, 160; Wesley, "The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption," Sermon 9, Works, Bicentennial ed., 1:255; "The Means of Grace," Sermon 16, Works, 1:393.

[175] Maddox, Responsible Grace, 160.

[176] Wesley, Letters, Telford ed., 4:103.

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To fall and to suffer no more! (JW 7: 280)

From the above illustrations, Wesley valued spiritual practices as a means to awaken people in the Spirit, affirm their faith, balance their spirituality, take them to perfection, and recover primitive Christianity, thus leading people to inward perfection and social holiness. It is a human and church responsibility to nurture souls, and in so doing, nurture the church.

Conclusions

Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit matured throughout his life and ministry. It developed from a rudimentary yearning for inward assurance of faith to a complex understanding of spiritual nurture and pastoral care for the Methodist movement.

From the theme of yearning, Wesley later understood that God offers providential grace that grows from a yearning to be saved, fascination with supernatural experiences, solid spiritual discipline and university training, and eventually a more mature yearning for inward and outward holiness. Such yearnings were not realized until God awakened him through family religious upbringing, mission experiences in the Holy Club and Georgia Mission, and the Moravian spiritual guides. These experiences reveal the significance of religious environments for triggering spiritual yearning.

From the theme of dramatic turns, beginning with his Aldersgate experience and his spiritual depression, he began to understand the experience of the Holy Spirit as possible and as perceptible inspiration. The dramatic experiences also awakened him to his own dark side; they led him through the

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instantaneous happiness he found in Moravian teaching, which did not last in his case; and it later brought him to believe in gradual holiness through internal righteousness. With Wesley's Spirit-led holiness, Christians can expect to experience wilderness, but they do not need to live in wilderness or darkness.

From the theme of supernatural experience and healing, Wesley was awakened to the various forms through which God changes people's lives, through quiet affirmation of faith and spiritual healing, as well as through dramatic fits, trances, convulsions, visions, dreams and physical healing. In addition, through proclamation of the Word and the invitation of the Holy Spirit, there are no limits to God's working, only the human limits that downplay the significance of such experiences and reject God's ways of spiritual awakenings.

From the theme of quietism, Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit began to mature in correlating justification and sanctification, and faith and actions of goodness. This view eventually led to his split from the Moravians and the Fetter Lane Society. Through the stillness controversy, he saw in quietism an antinomianism that avoided spiritual nurture and human responsibility, and led to an indifference to the Holy Spirit's perfecting Christians through all means of grace. Wesley began to understand that the experience of the Holy Spirit would not lead one to a closed religion, to extreme mysticism, or to discard worship, the sacraments, reading Scripture, or a love for one's neighbors.

From the theme of proclamation, Wesley began to understand the Spirit's work as inseparable from building a relationship with Christ, building up the church and expanding Christian understanding of mission. He was led, through

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the field preaching, to see that God's mission is not restricted to church walls, but to where people are; he came to see the world as his parish.[177] From observing the Spirit's blessing on his proclamation, Wesley grasped three main themes for presenting Christ: Justification, Perfection, and Faith and law. Heitzenrater concludes from his study of Wesley that the best general method in every proclamation is "to invite, to convince, to offer Christ, and to build up."[178]

From the theme of enthusiasm and challenge of discernment, Wesley crafted a sharper understanding of the Spirit's witness when defending charges of enthusiasm. Wesley understood that, while there are always limits to discerning the Spirit through human reason and experience, there are objective guidelines for guarding against enthusiasm and for discerning the Spirit. Wesley believed that Scripture, reason, Christian experience, and fruits of the Spirit, would guard against the charges of enthusiasm.

From the theme of the importance of spiritual practices, Wesley understood that spiritual awakening, faith in Christ, a balanced inward and social holiness, Christian perfection, and faithfulness to primitive Christianity could be nurtured and restored. Churches and leaders must be mindful not to neglect the significance of Wesley's insights.

In the next chapter, John Sung's understanding of the Holy Spirit in his life and ministry will be compared with John Wesley, in order to draw out models for spiritual revival and Christian education.

[177] Wesley's famous saying "I look upon the world as my parish," thus became the Methodist symbol of its openness to mission.

[178] Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 145.

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CHAPTER 5

Seeds for Awakening and Living in the Spirit: John Sung

In no other country have there been so many plantings and replantings of Christianity as in China. Four times, missionaries came to plough the souls of the Chinese people and to plant in them the seeds of faith, in hopes of reaping a spiritual harvest.[1] Many Chinese Christians now reflect on this history as evidence of the Holy Spirit's working among them, especially during the political storms of the twentieth century. Chinese indigenous leaders and revivalists responded to the Spirit, allowing the seeds of Christianity, planted by missionaries, to blossom in Chinese soil. Given this, Christianity can finally claim its own Chinese experience. Many people contributed to the making of Chinese church history; however, John Sung is a pivotal figure in the indigenous Chinese experience of Christianity.

Within this context, John Sung provides an excellent model for exploring the Chinese understanding of the Holy Spirit since the Chinese Christian leaders themselves referred to him as a model revivalist who kindled fire in their hearts.[2] In addition, Sung's intense impact on churches in China and the Diaspora can still

[1] Ka-lun Leung, Blessing Upon China, 16; Sheng FuYang, 33-224; Chang Sheng Gu,16-116. According to these Chinese historians, Christianity came to China at least four times. The first recorded arrival was AD 635 when the Nestorians came to China in the Tang Dynasty; the second was in the thirteenth century when Roman Catholics came during the Yuan Dynasty; the third was in the sixteenth century when Saint Francis came in the Ming dynasty; the fourth was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when Roman Catholics and Protestants came at the end of the Ching Dynasty.

[2] Schubert, 8; Lyall, ix; Leung, "Revivalists' Influence and Shaping of the Chinese Churches," 109 [translation mine]. All shared the similar view that Sung was a model revivalist.

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be traced.[3] My interest in this study comes from two directions, one scholarly and one personal. The scholarly interest derives from Sung's influence on spiritual traditions in Chinese churches, and the personal interest derives from my late grandmother's active membership in Sung's evangelistic band.[4] I join many other Chinese Christian scholars in exploring this heritage in order to find seeds for spiritual awakening.

In the previous chapter, I explored John Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit through several themes that emerged in his life and ministry. In the same manner, the purpose of this section is to examine similar themes and to illumine John Sung's understanding of the Holy Spirit. I do not include quietism since that was mainly in Wesley's historical and religious context. The themes explored will reveal how Sung linked his understanding of the Holy Spirit with salvation, repentance, witness for Christ, and a Christian life of inward and social holiness. His experience will be expressed in language that differs from Wesley's. This understanding, when compared with John Wesley, can uncover seeds for a Spirit-centered education, grounded in spiritual practices. In addition, the divergence of these two figures will suggest implications for Chinese churches.

[3] I observe from Sung's bibliography that almost every ten years there were biographical works, sermons and essays published on Sung, especially during the years since China's reopening in the 1980s, and Sung's diary was published in the 1990s. According to the Christian preaching Band Yearbook, there were at least two Sung memorial halls built, one in Sibu, Malaysia and one in Chien Len Bible College, not only in honor of Sung but also to indicate the revival of interest in his advocacy of preaching bands.

[4] I did not know this until I started my research on the effects of John Sung's evangelistic band in my late grandmother's hometown four years ago. Somehow, the image of the seed of the Holy Spirit has been imprinted in me as long as I can remember through awakening to the presence of the Holy Spirit at my grandmother's funeral.

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Yearning

This section examines John Sung's understanding of the Holy Spirit though his yearning. Two questions will direct this exploration. First, what inspired Sung's yearning to understand the Holy Spirit? Second, what did this yearning reveal about his understanding of the Holy Spirit? I trace four experiences for reflection. First is the death in the family. Second is the Hinghwa Revival in China, 1909. Third is the "little pastor" experience in 1913-1919. Fourth is his wilderness experience in America in 1920-1927. Each of these experiences reveals that Sung's yearning for the Holy Spirit gradually emerged into a spiritual awakening to God's presence, salvation, and calling on his life to save souls.

For John Sung (Sung, Shang-Chieh), who grew up in a Methodist pastor's family in China, the yearning for divine help began with several deaths in the family. The first death experience in the family was when Sung arrived home from elementary school to find his parents weeping over the dead figure of his younger sister. This was his first face-to-face experience with the mystery of death. In his diary he recalled how, after squeezing her cold hands in his, he had nightmares. From then on, he asked his father and himself the big question: "Where do people go after death?"[5] His question served as an invitation for his father to reflect with him about eternal life.

Another death in the family occurred after his high school years in 1919. On June 24 of that year he came home from village evangelism with his brother

[5] Sung , Diary of His Spiritual Life, 2; My Testimony, 8-9. [Hereafter the English translation of Sung's works in these two books is mine].

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in-law and found that his oldest sister had contracted a vicious infection and died within a few hours. The same night, his younger brother had serious vomiting and diarrhea. Sung pled with God for his brother's healing, promising, in return, to serve God as a preacher. He then nursed his brother back to eventual recovery. Sung later remembered that he had wished he were a woman so he might become a nurse. He subsequently developed a strong interest in spiritual healing.[6] Here, the yearning for understanding for eternal life changed to yearning for healing and salvation.

The second experience is the Hinghwa Revival that occurred during Holy Week, 1909. The service began Maundy Thursday with Rev. Lim Hoon Wan preaching "Jesus at Gethsemane."[7] The next day, the Good Friday service began at 11 a.m. After both of these services, the congregation of a few hundred went home weeping. Friday evening, more than thirty people came back for a fasting service. After the 7 p.m. service, many stood for confession. The next morning in a dawn prayer meeting, the church was packed. Not only did the people confess their sins, but some young penitents also started turning over stolen goods. Later that day, the church had to erect a tent to accommodate thousands of people who came from Amoy, the province of Foo Chow, and Southeast China.[8] Interestingly, that type of occurrence was repeated in his own revivals.

[6] Sung, Diary, 5; My Testimony, 25-26. In Sung's My Testimony account, he especially stated his interest in Jesus' spiritual healing.

[7] Sung, My Testimony, 10. This account was based on the Hinghwa Methodist Church Yearbook as gathered in Sung's *My Testimony's* work.

[8] Sung, Diary, 2-4; My Testimony, 9-14.

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Sung called that revival the work of the Holy Spirit in China.[9] He recalled that the Passion Story of Christ, as narrated by the pastor, moved his nine-year-old heart to tears. He did not have a strong sense of repentance. However, the narrative of Christ's passion and the revival itself awakened him to the importance of the Holy Spirit in setting a fire in the hearts of people. It made a life-long imprint him, giving him a sense of the power and excitement, which attracted him to serve God; he developed a yearning for the conversion experience and being filled by the Holy Spirit like the others. About the revival, he said it was "as if it was God's Script for him" to prepare him for praying and participating in revivals later in his life.[10] He recalled that other nine-year-old children like himself were converted, and that as many as 500 or 600 stolen balls were turned in at the altar.[11]

Even though Sung and his biographers do not see this as his conversion, I argue that the process of spiritual awakening had begun.[12] According to his diary, he later worked as a "little pastor" or a little revivalist, assisting his father with the sudden influx of new Christians by preaching for the evening service, actively participating in village evangelism, and even leading people to repentance and to Christ.[13] As a child, Sung may not have been totally repentant, but one could say

[9] Sung, Diary, 3; 3; My Testimony, 9.

[10] Sung, My Testimony, 9.

[11] Ibid., 13; Sung, Diary, 3.

[12] Lee, Samuel Mau-Cheng, "A Comparative Study of Leadership Selection Process among Four Chinese Leaders" (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1985), English summary. In Lee's dissertation, he also argued that a strong spiritual foundation was built into Sung's life.

[13] Sung, Diary, 4-5; and My Testimony, 18.

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that he was aware of being blessed with the Spirit of God working through him, drawing people to God. In addition, he was fascinated by the power of the Spirit displayed in revivals. Sung's close friend William E. Schubert discovered that, after twenty years, Dr. Sung himself still managed to research the results of the Hinghwa Pentecost, and found 2000 converts out of the original 3000.[14]

The third experience is Sung's little pastor period from 1913-1919. Sung was impressed by his father's successful leadership, which helped mission schools and local government officials, even though it did not bring home much financial reward for family support.[15] When he entered junior high school, Sung helped his father organize the three thousand church members, hosting three services on Sunday. An avid reader, he was also able to remember sermons and illustrations so well that he found no difficulty in composing good Scriptural sermons from anything he heard or read. When his father was sick or out of town, John acted as substitute preacher during the evening services. Meanwhile, he also helped his father by editing *The Revival Magazine.* During summer and spring breaks, he was called the "little pastor," because he was involved in open-air preaching, giving out tracts, selling Bibles, and leading songs. He enjoyed this so much that he grasped every opportunity to preach, sometimes forgetting to eat.[16]

[14] Schubert, 17.

[15] Sung, My Testimony, 17; and "Out of Modernism into God's Family," in Andrew Gih, Into God's Family: The Life Stories and Message of China's Famous Bethel Evangelistic Bands (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1933), 54. In the later account, Sung described his father as a successful pastor, and in the former account he related his father's contribution to the community; but they remained poor.

[16] Sung, My Testimony, 18-19; Diary, 4.

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Sung's enthusiasm for preaching surprised even himself.[17] He realized that even without a dramatic conversion experience, his preaching had power to convert people, if he preached according to the Bible.[18] Thus, he began to understand that the power of the Holy Spirit and Bible are essentials for revivals.

Sung's yearning for a close relationship with God and for the power of the Holy Spirit began to grow. When he was 17, he made two changes; he began following his father's footsteps in writing a diary and in going to the mountains to pray in the early mornings. Praying to be filled with the Holy Spirit, he read the letter to the Romans and the gospel of John many times. He chose these books because they had inspired his father's conversion. But he experienced neither conversion nor being filled with the Holy Spirit. He was still an arrogant youth, sometimes even playing pranks with the Buddhist statues. He later explained that "being filled with the Holy Spirit was not the work of humans, but came according to God's own time and by His free will."[19] Even so, the desire for spiritual awakening was planted. Sung understood that God granted his yearning for the power of the Holy Spirit, but on a different timetable.

The fourth experience is Sung's wilderness years in America from 1920-1927. It was a wilderness experience based on his unhappiness, despite success in many ways. Sung received three academic degrees in five years and two months: undergraduate degree from Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio, in 1923; a

[17] Sung, My Testimony, 18-19. He commented that "it was the special grace of God that gave me such great interest in preaching." Diary, 4.

[18] Sung, My Testimony, 17-19.

[19] Ibid., 27-28.

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master's degree in chemistry from Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, in 1924; and a Ph.D. in chemistry along with the distinguished Golden Key award in 1926. But there were many crossroad experiences that indicate his lost state and yearning. Reflecting on the years of intense study and religious search in America, he once wrote, "My soul wandered in a wilderness. I could neither sleep nor eat. My faith was like a leaking ship, storm-driven without captain or compass. My heart was filled with the deepest unhappiness."[20] His lament implied a longing for guidance from the captain who is the Spirit. This reflects Sung's yearning for God's Spirit as his guide.

Two major crossroad experiences stood out, reflecting this yearning. The first was his wrestling between science and faith, between the social gospel and faith, and with the inner search for God's call, for a vision, for assurance of his own salvation, and for the power of the Holy Spirit.[21] This wrestling intensified as he struggled to decide between a career as a scientist, educator or preacher, which he found especially difficult given his academic success and acquaintance with John Dewey and the social gospel movement.[22] He also reflected on his own roots in Methodist evangelical revivalism and its social gospel.[23] He felt a

[20] Lyall, 31. The remarks are Lyall's direct quote of Sung, but he did not reveal the original source.

[21] Sung, "Reflection," in Liu, Yih Ling. Anecdotes and Sayings of John Sung (1967; reprint, Hong Kong: China Alliance Press, 1992), 12. [The translation of Sung's work hereafter is mine].

[22] Sung, Diary, 15-16; and Lyall, 25. Sung participated actively with the International League of Peace and campaigned through the Association against the color bar and racial discrimination in the University. Thorough this League, he began to see himself as an advocate for the social gospel and also started to become friends with John Dewey.

[23] Sung, Diary, 15-17.

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deep yearning for God's calling, the assurance for salvation, and the power of the Holy Spirit, but because of "the study of comparative religions and modernism he almost lost his faith."[24]

During this crossroad experience, Sung's yearning for God's call intensified in response to the slogan--common especially during the anti-Christian movement in 1927--to save China or save the lost souls among young Chinese intellectuals and Christians. (I have noted this in the China chapter.) In his journal, Sung revealed his struggle whether to find ways to save China from the exploitation and imperialism of Western powers or to save Chinese souls.

A vision of God came to him when his evangelism team was invited to lead a revival meeting in Smithville, a village in Ohio, during Thanksgiving of 1922. He shared this vision at the revival meeting in Smithville, and later in other places in China and in United States. He discovered that every time he shared that vision, the spiritual meaning of God's calling touched many.[25] In his dream he saw a vision that revealed a seed of spiritual awakening and also revealed his yearning for God's calling. In the vision,

> I was brought back to the cliff I used to pray in my hometown in China and heard millions of people crying for help. They were drowning, the streams of water became ocean, and found myself changed to be a helpless child, and a sinner, bleeding and bound with all kind of chains. While overwhelmed by this great impossibility, I saw an eagle approaching only to find out it was a bloody Cross, with words of "Focus on the Cross, press on forward." When I looked at the Cross, all the chains were opened; and I was set free. With this freedom, I wanted to press on to save the rest of the people, only found myself fell into the midst of the millions meters

[24] Sung, "Reflection," in Liu, Anecdotes, 12.

[25] Sung, Diary, 12.

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> deep. The moment I cried out for God's help, I felt my legs lifted up; and stood on that Cross. The Cross took me to the middle of the ocean, like a magnet attracting the crowd. The people were saved; and the cross expanded to the whole horizons; so much so you see no more water. It has become a paradise of flowers and birds. I found myself leaping for joy, and many people who are my people and my blood- kin came and shook hands with me. I was so happy and found myself dancing; so much so I almost kicked my room-mate out of the bed.[26]

This vision brought Sung back to the place where he used to pray, an awakening experience for him from several perspectives. First, he was awakened to see millions of people crying for help in China. Second, he realized that he was in no position to help because he himself was bound in chains. Third, he discovered that his salvation through the cross and his passion would not save them from drowning in the ocean. Fourth, he realized that through preaching or "standing on the Cross" many would be drawn to the message and be saved, and that the ocean would change to paradise. That vision reflected Sung's later ministry by which many were drawn because he preached the message of the cross. He constantly preached on this dream to show that God's Spirit is revealed through dreams.

Sung understood that God's Spirit is revealed to him also through Scripture, which opened doors for him. One night, Sung heard the voice of Jesus warning him, "For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world but forfeits his entire life?" (Matthew 16:26)[27] Coincidentally, the next morning Rev. Wilbur Fowler, the Wesleyan Foundation man at Ohio State came to visit him and bluntly told him that he looked less like a scientist, and more like a preacher. The conversation swayed Sung. Saying, "Why not try New York?," he enrolled in

[26] Ibid., 11-12.

[27] Sung, Diary, 17; My Testimony, 69.

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Union Theological Seminary with an underlying agenda to study at Columbia University. He had a yearly allowance of $500.[28]

The years at Union Theological Seminary began Sung's second crossroad experience. He searched for disciplines that would bring spiritual awakenings, especially the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His yearning for these answers led him through disciplinary studies on modernism, liberalism, comparative religions, the social gospel, Buddhism, and Taoism. He struggled with the school's position that all roads reach the same end. He tried Zen meditation. In terms of exegesis of the Bible and its mission, he said the school taught that: "If philosophy cannot explain the scriptures, then try the scientific approach. If Science cannot prove it, perhaps it will fall to the categories of phenomenology, then try psychology as mission approach. If all disciplines cannot explain it, then do not believe in it."[29] This comment reflects how troubled Sung was by the modernist impulse of using the scientific approach to study religion. His critique was that "liberalism's approach in that era basically built up students' mental knowledge but not their spiritual lives"[30] Later in his critique of liberalism and modernism this became his main attack on the sins of missionaries and seminaries that did not awaken and nurture students' spirituality, but rather killed their passions and receptivity to Christian religious experience.

[28] Sung, Diary, 17; My Testimony, 69.

[29] Sung, Diary, 18.

[30] Ibid.

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At this crossroads, Sung attended a revival meeting in New York before Christmas of 1926. It was at Calvary Baptist Church where Dr. Haldeman was pastor. He expected to hear an eloquent and learned male preacher, but instead heard a fifteen-year-old girl. As she came to the podium, read the scripture, and preached the message of the Cross, Sung became aware of a different atmosphere, in which God's presence could be felt. He observed that "many people, including pastors and government officials, would come up and confess their sins."[31] The scene was familiar to him from his experience of the Hinghwa revival; but instead of a mature male preacher, the experience had now come through a young girl. He later wrote to his friend, "If the preachers do not have the life of Christ, Christ will not accept him as his witness. When we preach gospel to people, do we have the baptism of the Holy Spirit?"[32] From then on, he studied the spiritual giants, examining their experience of baptism of the Holy Spirit and of the power of the Holy Spirit coming through preaching.[33]

In short, out of his yearning, Sung understood God's Spirit as work of God's presence, grace, and power. He understood that the yearning for salvation, assurance of faith, God's calling, and filling by the Holy Spirit, was planted by God's Spirit, especially through the revival experience and from a religious upbringing by parents with a strong trust in prayer. God's Spirit was revealed

[31] Ibid., 19; Sung, My Testimony, 76-77.

[32] Sung, Diary, 19; My Testimony, 76-77.

[33] Sung, My Testimony,79.

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through Scriptures, prayer, mission, dreams and visions.

Dramatic Turns

The experience of the Holy Spirit can take the form of dramatic turns. In Sung's case, it was the vivid experience of a visit of the trinitarian God in February 10, 1927. This section examines the spiritual upheavals that led to his admittance at Bloomingdale Mental Hospital, and his reflection on these frustrations.

In his diary, Sung communicated that the Holy Spirit constantly spoke to him through Scriptures. The whispering voice of the Holy Spirit came to him on New Year's eve 1926 through the Scripture. The words, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart" (1Cor. 1:19). Trembling with fear for what it meant, Sung could not close his eyes until the dawn of the New Year of 1927.[34] This voice troubled him, causing him to seek for real wisdom that would lead to spiritual awakening.

Sung's yearning for a conversion experience and the power of the Holy Spirit to witness was very intense. He decided to give up everything else in order to seek the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. Lyall observed that "[H]e absented himself from lectures and spent the time in prayer."[35] Then on the evening of February 10 light broke on his darkened soul, an event which he called

[34] Ibid., 20.

[35] Lyall, 33.

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his conversion experience.[36]

On that night, he saw all his sins spread before him. At first it seemed there was no way to get rid of them and that he must go to hell. He tried to forget them, but he could not. Sung described that "they pierced his very heart."[37] He searched in his trunk for his neglected New Testament and began to read it again for the first time in months. Turning to the story of the cross in Luke 23, it came alive to him. The image was so vivid that "it was the sight of the Savior dying for his sins and he seemed to be there at the foot of the Cross, pleading to be washed from all his sins in the Precious Blood."[38] It was a vision similar to what the Apostle Paul saw on the Damascus road. Then he heard a voice saying, "Son, thy sins are forgiven," and "his load of sin seemed to fall at once from his shoulders." He further described that "a feeling of intense relief came over him and he leapt to his feet, shouting "Hallelujah!"[39] Later, he claims to have had a visible experience of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit entering his room.[40] This heavenly visit awakened him to the trinitarian nature of God, the pain of Christ on the cross, and unveiled to him his mission.

Sung was enlightened to understand that he was dead to sin and crucified with Christ. He was told he would thereafter be named after John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. John Sung understood himself to be called to be a herald of

[36] Sung, Diary, 20-21; My Testimony, 81-82.

[37] Sung, My Testimony, 80.

[38] Ibid, 80-81; Sung, Diary, 20.

[39] Sung, My Testimony, 81.

[40] Ibid.

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the coming King, to prepare His way before Him like John the Baptist. Pictures of his spiritual journey were replayed to him until dawn.[41] Forgetting that it was still early, and that others were sleeping, he rushed into the dormitory hallway, loudly praising God and sharing his new conversion experience with everybody that he met.[42] For Sung, God's s visit marked a dramatic turns in his life.

This dramatic experience was not just a conversion experience but also a spiritual awakening to God's will and mission for him. Sung responded in two ways that led people to suspect him of being insane. First, he could not contain himself but started to witness zealously. Second, he boldly confronted his former favorite professor Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick before the class, "You are of the devil. You made me lose my faith, and you are causing these other young men to lose their faith."[43] Sung intensely criticized his professor's liberal theology for damaging the students' spiritual awakenings. When Sung expressed his enthusiasm by evangelizing every person he met, displaying loud praises and shedding tears in his confession, the school concluded that he was mentally ill and admitted him to a mental hospital.[44]

Sung's spiritual upheavals led him to Bloomingdale Mental Hospital in February 17, a week after his conversion. In Sung's reflection, he thought it was God's plan for him to rest and spend time reading the Bible, so he willingly

[41] Sung, Diary, 20; My Testimony, 81-82.

[42] Sung, Diary, 19-21; My Testimony, 82.

[43] Schubert, 20. This is Schubert's inside story that Sung told to him.

[44] Sung, Diary, 21.

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accepted Dr. Coffin's arrangement for him to be taken to the mental ward.[45] However, he ended up staying for 193 of the darkest days of his life. He recorded that he was treated like prisoner under strict supervision, with physical and psychological examinations.[46] After an unsuccessful attempt to escape, later being restrained with more violent, insane patients, Sung's pain and confusion became so unbearable that he contemplated suicide. Then the Lord spoke to him, assuring him that "all things work together for good to them that love God," adding that, "If you have patience, after 193 days you will have learned to carry your cross and follow me on the road of obedience."[47] In fact, after 193 days, with Sung's protest letter sent to China's embassy and the help of his friend Dr. Walker, who had just returned from Europe, he was discharged in August 30, 1927.[48]

Sung reflected that the asylum was his "theological seminary."[49] He believed God had prepared him with two basic lessons. One is about spending time reading the whole Bible, following various key thoughts. He read the Bible from cover to cover 40 times with 40 different approaches, until each of the 1,189

[45] Ibid., 22. Sung, My Testimony, 86. Sung described how, prior to his admission, when he had gone out to buy a new Bible and pen, he encountered three children at different times scribbling the word 'rest' on the floor. He interpreted that as "God's warning him to prepare to rest"; and thinking he would be there for a week.

[46] Sung, My Testimony, 86-89; Diary, 23.

[47] Sung, My Testimony, 91; Diary, 23. Sung, "Out of Modernism," 59. The quote is a direct citation from Sung, "Out of Modernism."

[48] Sung, Diary, 24; My Testimony, 92; Lyall, 39. Lyall's source revealed Rollin Walker rescued Sung; and the editor's of the diary concurred with Lyall's information since Sung did not identify the name.

[49] Sung, "Out of Modernism," 58-59; Diary, 25.

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chapters was a clear picture in his mind. The other lesson was disciplining his obedience and patience. He explained, "What the Lord made me learn in the asylum was obedience. He kept me there until my impetuous disposition gave place to patience."[50] Later, Sung realized that God had kept him from the disasters of flood and heat that occurred that summer while he simply focused on the Bible and received good nutrition.[51] Sung understood that God's Spirit prepared His servants--by grounding them in faith in the Bible, teaching them to be sensitive and to trust the Holy Spirit, which provided hope for rescue.

However, I can trace how Sung's dramatic turns displayed two classic behavior patterns and a dilemma common to most young Christians who have experienced a dramatic conversion. The first reaction involves zealous passion for evangelism, often resulting in fatigue, accompanied by loss of common sense, clarity, and the humility to learn from anyone other than God alone. Second, it produces that enthusiasm which tends to view one's own religious experiences as the absolute truth, disregarding the importance of theological discipline. It creates a classic dualistic approach to theology and practice that puts one position over against another, (as discussed in Chapter 2). These behavior patterns lead to a frustrating dilemma about one's future vocation and life. When confused by the conversion experience and their enthusiasm, some converts lose their faith entirely, some enroll themselves in a cult that monitors their religious lives, some are challenged to ground their faith in pursuit of a connection between knowledge

[50] Sung, "Out of Modernism," 59; My Testimony, 92-93. This quote is composed of the English and Chinese translation of Sung's wording.

[51] Sung, Diary, 25.

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and experience, while some actually become insane or are judged to be religious fanatics. From Sung's reflection of God's plan for him, he seems to have yearned for faith to be more grounded in the Bible and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, while at the same time wanting to guard against charges of enthusiasm in his revivals. This last concern greatly influenced his future revivals, as will be illustrated later.

Sung's admittance to the mental hospital also reflected how Union Theological Seminary failed to comprehend the experience of baptism by the Holy Spirit. Its reaction, as discussed in Chapter 2, was based on the common tendency to deny revivalists' claims regarding any work of the Holy Spirit. Not able to distinguish whether his passion for Christ was a witness of the Spirit or fanaticism, he was instead judged to be a fanatic. When Sung returned to China in September 1927, his parents greeted him initially with mixed emotions fearing that their son was mentally unbalanced. Sung claimed later, "[B]ut a week at home convinced them that [I] had received a new life. [My] father encouraged [me] to go out and give [my] testimony."[52] A month following his return, according to Sung's diary, the parents arranged for Sung to be married.[53] The father's Chinese spirituality could accept his son's experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, his passion for Christ and for China's lost souls, as signs of guidance by the Holy Spirit for which he had been wrongly diagnosed as mentally ill.

[52] Sung, "Out of Modernism," 59.

[53] Sung, Diary, 27-28.

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In reflecting on this spiritual crisis, Sung made three claims, identifying his life changes and also reflecting his understanding of the Holy Spirit. First, he said, "I do not think I am insane." He explained further that, not only did he read the Bible in the mental hospital, he also studied history, economics, and sociology.[54] Second, he said, "But I have changed. Christ is my life, history is my teacher, and science is my research tool. I am a newborn person."[55] Third, he discovered new principles of life: pragmatism, God as love, no self, and a view of the world as nothing. He concluded that "People might think I am insane; let them be."[56] From Sung's reflection of his spiritual awakening during his time in the mental hospital, it seems that he was recommitted to the Bible, became Christ-centered, and identified with one clear mission--to save the Chinese through the preaching of the message of the Cross. This dramatic turn revealed his understanding of the Holy Spirit as his guide to confirm his faith, his call, and also train him for the mission ahead; but not without the high cost of testing of his understanding of the Holy Spirit. His experience serves as a flashing red light to signal the imperative need to provide solid spiritual nurture to ground Christians in the Bible, and enable them to learn to love, to build up each other, to witness, and to be open to God's inspiration. If this does not happen, the seeds planted by God will not have the good environment they need to grow.

[54] Ibid., 25.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid., 25. These four principles are literal translations of his terms.

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Supernatural Experience and Healing

Sung became convinced that the experience of the Holy Spirit can take the forms of supernatural experiences and healing. This section examines Sung's interpretation of the signs of the Holy Spirit displayed during his revivals and the healing activities emerging in his ministry. Sung's reflections will reveal his understanding of the Holy Spirit especially as a direct contribution to revivals.

In Sung's ministry, he claimed that God had revealed that his life was to follow an outline of five periods, namely: "Water, Door, Dove, Blood, and Tomb."[57] William Schubert interpreted Sung's words as prophecy, and he reminded Sung each time a period was fulfilled.[58] The most obvious incident was when the missionary Jeannie Hughes dismissed Sung because he could no longer work with the Bethel Evangelistic Band. Then, Sung recorded, Schubert reminded him that his Door period had ended; and the ministry was entering the Dove period.[59] These five periods will cover at least ten years of Sung's fifteen-year ministry; the first three years were spent testing different methods and the last two years found him confined to his bed. Sung understood that the Holy Spirit was his personal guide throughout this ministry, blessing him with power to witness for Christ.

Before the five periods actually began, Sung was in a preparatory period.

[57] Schubert, 10, 23. Schubert recalled it was during the door period -- after the Nanchang Revival -- that Sung told him that each period was about three years from November to November (except the fifth period during which he had four surgeries and was confined to bed; and the details were not confirmed).

[58] Ibid., 10, 12.

[59] Sung, Diary, 155. Schubert reminded Sung again of his tomb period in 1940 when Sung rested in bed (289-90).

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William Schubert recalled Sung telling him that "he was to prepare the way of the Lord."[60] In this preparatory times, Sung worked under the Methodist system as a religious educator, preacher, and science teacher. He later organized evangelistic teams for rural areas, particularly for students. This is the period when he talked extensively of the approaches he was integrating from missionaries and from Methodist evangelicalism.[61] This is the time when his little pastor experience of practical training bore fruit; he spoke of the importance of lay mission work.

As Sung entered his Water period, he realized that he had been inefficient in the first three years of evangelizing. He felt that he lacked the power, presence of the Holy Spirit and any evidence of supernatural experiences or healing. He reflected on the reason: "The church does not pray, I did not invite people to confess their sins, and I did not pray to be filled by the Holy Spirit."[62] He further evaluated his preaching that "it had been coming from my brain, lacked spiritual power in prayer and preaching."[63] When asked why he did not use science to save China, he replied that born-again salvation comes only through the power of the Holy Spirit.[64] He showed signs of searching for a Spirit-filled model of holiness.

Schubert identified the next period as the Door Period because the door

[60] Schubert, 23.

[61] Sung, Diary, 28-60.

[62] Ibid., 67, 72. The later account recorded the full reasons for the lack of power in his preaching.

[63] Ibid., 102.

[64] Ibid.

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opened for Sung to work beyond his own province, Fukien, and he began a wider ministry.[65] It was the period when Sung traveled throughout China with an indigenous Chinese evangelist team known as the Bethel Evangelistic Band. The band was "founded by Phoebe and Mary Stones, two Chinese sisters who were medical doctors" under the then Methodist Episcopal Church, and particularly under Jeannie V. Hughes.[66] Sung basically traveled with this Band, leading its many revival meetings. Bays remarked that "by 1935, when the band dissolved, they had traveled 50,000 miles, visited 133 cities, and held almost 3,400 revivals at churches of all denominations."[67] During this period, Sung understood that God's spirit opened doors of revivals for China and Sung.

The March 1931 Nanchang revival was the turning point of his ministry. Supernatural experiences were displayed uniting prayers with confession of sins, witnessing with power in the village, followed by actions of repentance. The story began with William E. Schubert, who believed in praying for Nanchang revivals. He made a commitment along with a Chinese seminary student to pray for Sung every morning at 6:00 for fifty days.[68] When Sung came to preach at Baldwin Girls' School, Nanchang Boys' Academy, and the women and children's hospital, he said "he was inspired to preach repentance and rebirth."[69] He was surprised that the message was received with such enthusiasm. Practically in the

[65] Schubert, 23.

[66] Daniel H. Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 171-72.

[67] Ibid., 172.

[68] Schubert, 28; Sung, Diary, 66.

[69] Sung., ibid., 67.

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first week all the students were converted and confessed their sins, after which they asked him to extend his stay. This was the same time as the anti-Christian movement, so the Chinese government had not approved of any required religious instructions in the schools. However, all the students were willing to stay for his preaching during their school break.

In the beginning, the teachers and missionaries disliked him. However, after two weeks, all 193 students and teachers went for village evangelism, and the entire village gave up their wooden idols.[70] Within the month, he found Schubert committed to fasting and prayer with great passion for China revivals. Sung overheard Schubert's prayer from downstairs, "Lord, let me see revival in Nanchang or let me go home to America!" Sung was very moved; so much so he got out of bed to pray. Later Sung saw feverish prayer as the essential key for revivals.[71] But the story did not end with repentance and giving up idols.

After the success of village evangelism and witnessing, the group of 250-300 people gathered in the Baldwin School Chapel for a prayer meeting. Sung led chorus singing and asked the group to pray for non-Christians and preachers. Schubert recorded that nobody prayed at first, and it was rather embarrassing. Later the two student bodies and the teachers of Baldwin Girl's School and Nanchang Boy's Academy stood up and prayed at the same time. Just then the Holy Spirit fell on everybody. There were no displays of fits, trances, and

[70] Schubert, 29-34.

[71] Sung, Diary, 67, 71-77; My Testimony, 117. Sung in his diary, especially during this period, teaches the churches that feverish prayer together is an essential work for church revival; without prayer, there is no revival nor continuous revival.

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convulsion but only unison prayers of confession.[72] In addition, William Schubert the missionary recalled himself praying in "torrents of Chinese."[73] The experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a scene of people confessing their sins in unison; even the missionary Schubert prayed in Chinese.

Sung's own reflection on the Nanchang revival in 1931 was that "in the past, I only knew the Holy Spirit working quietly, not knowing he can work so dramatically and openly grasping people's hearts."[74] That was his first experience of the Holy Spirit working in people when they become holy before God. Sung began to grasp that confession and repentance followed as marks of the supernatural experiences or witness to the Holy Spirit.

Based on the above observation, I agree with the Leung, that "Sung saw himself as the successor to John Wesley in China."[75] Leung, a Chinese Church historian, identified in Sung three elements of revival that reflect an understanding of the Holy Spirit that parallels John Wesley's: 1) complete repentance and confession of sins; 2) seeking the filling of the Holy Spirit; 3) witness for the Lord.[76] However, I will add two other elements of revival -- Bible study and prayer practices were very important elements in their revivals. In short, Sung was convinced by the second period of his ministry that revival depends on

[72] Sung, Diary, 70-71; My Testimony, 118-119. In My Testimony, Sung added that even the youths who were into the anti-Christian movement asked God's forgiveness.

[73] Schubert, 34.

[74] Sung, Diary, 70.

[75] Leung, "Revivalists' Influence and Shaping of the Chinese Churches," 131.

[76] Ibid.

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prayer, confession of sins, and the outpouring of the Spirit. For Sung, the door period also meant that the Spirit would open doors for people's confessions and for Sung's revivals. Sung observed that when people responded to his call for confession, and the people confessed and rejected sin, their mission teams would launch out with power.

Sung understood that the outpouring work of the Holy Spirit, especially in the next two periods (Dove and Blood Periods), were marked not only with confession, repentance, and witness, but also with healing. The marks of these periods, which Sung described as the work of the Holy Spirit, were several. First, God opened doors to preach widely.[77] Second, revivals followed everywhere Sung preached.[78] Third, the Holy Spirit convicted thousands of people.[79] Fourth, thousands of evangelistic bands were formed to witness for Christ. Fifth, many people were healed on the last day of the revival meetings.[80]

The healing of many thousands was a phenomenon in Sung's revivals. It began with his door period in December 10, 1931 and ended at the blood period in 1939. I observed that there were no records of the healing ministry, while he himself was enduring four surgeries at home between 1940 and 1944. The

[77] Sung, Diary, 157; Schubert, 24. The Blood Period referred to the period when Japan attacked China, and China bled as its soldiers stood up and fought; but Sung was able to preach widely and revivals followed. Schubert described that though Sung himself bled during this time (having fistula and bleeding bowels), Sung was still actively holding revival meetings and healing services.

[78] Sung, Diary, 157-228. In these two sections, Sung recorded surprisingly many revivals.

[79] Leung, "Revivalists' Influence and Shaping of the Chinese Churches," 110. Leung mentioned that according to Chinese estimate, John Sung and the Bethel Evangelistic Band had preached to 500,000 people and led about 50,000 people to Christ in China alone.

[80] Ibid.

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healing ministries mostly appeared on the last day of his revival meetings (always in worship), after the laying on of hands or when people repented of their sins. Sung admitted that in the beginning he had no faith in laying on hands for sick people. He understood the Holy Spirit saves in convicting people, affirmation of faith, in witness and also through healing.

In 1931, while Sung finished the revival meeting at Peingtu, the missionary Mr. Paryer asked him to lay hands on the sick. Initially, Sung refused, saying that "he had no faith in this;" but the missionaries challenged him whether he believed in the Bible's admonition to lay hands on the sick as quoted in James 5:14-15.[81] Reluctantly, Sung knelt down and prayed first and later laid hands on more than thirty sick people. Without opening his eyes, Sung asked if anybody had been healed. He was surprised to learn the answer was yes. One woman paralyzed for eighteen years was able to walk again. The woman, Ms. Low Yoke Lan, and her husband became revivalists in the area of Shantung.[82]

From Sung's diary it is clear that Sung did not end every revival meeting with a healing service, especially in his door period. The healing service seems to be related to the repentance of sins and the active prayer ministry in each local church. After the event in Peingtu, the news of Sung's new spiritual gifts carried to other places. When he was invited to preach in Chingdow, he refused to go to people's houses to pray for the sick or have healing services there. When Sung was questioned, he replied "I am here not to heal the sick, but the sinful. Only at

[81] Sung, Diary, 105; Liu , Life of John Sung, 151[Hereafter translation of Liu's work is mine].

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very special occasions I will pray for the sick."[83] Sung's reply perhaps also reflected his awareness it was the Holy Spirit who healed; his role was to pray for the sick.

Sung demonstrated later that the healing ministry relates significantly to the church's prayer ministry and the members' repentance of sins. The church in Peingtu recorded another incident in which a woman who had been paralyzed for 30 years, after confessing her sins and with the local church members praying for her, was able to walk four miles to witness for Christ.[84]

The most obvious test for Sung was the Amoy healing service on November 9, 1934. Sung's rivals planned to bring more than 80 people suffering from unusual sicknesses to test whether it was Sung's magic or the power of the Holy Spirit that healed them. Sung invited many church members to pray for a response to this threat. Sung preached first the healing principles, then led them to repentance of sins, and finally prayed for 1710 sick people. Many of the blind regained sight, the lame walked and the paralyzed walked home without help, the mentally ill were healed, and the addicted cured from addiction. This was the famous Amoy revival that extended to twelve days instead of the originally planned six days. As a result of the numbers of souls who repented, the gambling house was closed. Sung was threatened with an assault by locals. However, Sung sought more opportunities to preach and concluded with even more healing on the

[82] Sung, Diary, 105.

[83] Ibid., 106.

[84] Ibid., 107.

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final day.[85] Liu remarks that China had never seen such a revival with four to five thousand converts, three hundred new evangelistic bands, and thousands who had been healed spread out everywhere for witnessing.[86]

After this mighty and successful revival, many others demanded that Sung hold additional healing services, but he refused to hold them in the town of Kaiheng, knowing that people came to see miracles but not to experience repentance. However, when a 47-year-old beggar confessed his sins during the meeting, his ten paralyzed fingers regained their ability to bend, and he no longer needed to beg for food.[87] This incident shows that Sung understood that healing follows on repentance. He understood the Holy Spirit blessed the church with healing when the church prayed, when people confessed their sins, and repentance followed. Interestingly, after Sung was confined in bed in his later tomb period, no more healing is recorded. It appears that the healing work of the Holy Spirit particularly blessed Sung during the three earlier periods of his ministry.[88]

Sung was very deliberate in claiming that these healing were not due to his holiness, but to the work of the Holy Spirit. With faith anyone can pray for the sick and those possessed by demons. Sung recorded that the evangelistic band members healed many. One example was casting demons out of a mother and son, who had been unable to walk, but after the healing they got up

[85] Sung, Diary, 175-76; Liu, Life of John Sung , 213-14.

[86] Liu, ibid., 213.

[87] Sung, Diary, 177.

[88] Schubert, 24. The three periods were the door, dove and blood periods.

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immediately.[89] Sung shared a vision he had while laying hands on the sick. He saw numerous angels marching around the chapel. Sung said that it was God doing the healing.[90] He taught that if Chinese Christians really wanted revivals, every Christian could organize a house meeting and every Christian should preach in faith.[91] In the same manner, another report came from the mouth of a young lad saying that when Sung laid hands on him, he saw a brightly gowned person standing by him.[92] Sung argued that it was Jesus actually doing the healing. Sung connected healing with faith, repentance, confession, and essentially the Holy Spirit's working.

During Sung's tomb period from 1940 to 1944, he kept to his bed, suffering from a series of hemorrhoid surgeries. The severe bleeding eventually caused his death. However, until the end, people came to his bedside where he still held three meetings a day.[93] Many were puzzled that Sung healed thousands of people but not himself. Sung's own interpretation was that this was God's way of taming his hot temper and molding his love for sufferers. In addition, Sung reflected that others believed it was God's way of showing Chinese Christians

[89] Sung, Diary, 189.

[90] Ibid.,185-86. Sung's daughter Levi recalls this incident in which her father told her the vision of numerous angels marching and surrounding the chapel.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 235.

[93] Schubert, 23-24; Sung, Diary, 27-334. Most of the countries in which Sung had preached – Hong Kong, Singapore, Indo-China, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and even the Netherlands East Indies – had one by one become involved in the Second World War during this period.

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that Sung was only a mortal person; it was God, not Sung, who was healer.[94] It appears to be God's mystery to demolish the human tendency to idolize Sung after all those dramatic, miraculous revivals. Sung's dying words were, "China will have its revivals, not by human works but totally through the work of the Spirit; and the work of the future Chinese churches is to be the work of prayer."[95] Sung reflected his total conviction that the future work of the church needed to focus on prayer and the Holy Spirit.

In short, Sung understood that Holy Spirit directly contributed to revivals. The supernatural experiences displayed were massive public confession of sins, repentance, Spirit-filled holiness with signs of passions for prayers and witness in the bands, and healing manifested. He advised church leadership that "preachers need to hold on to three secrets of the experience of the Holy Spirit: prayer, Bible study, and holiness."[96] From then on, the fire of revivalism was kindled wherever he went, people flocked to him, demons were cast out, people confessed sin, the sick were healed and thousands of evangelism teams branched out. To Sung, prayer, confession, Bible study, holiness and revivals were parallel.

Proclamation

John Sung believed that the Holy Spirit works through many means and he particularly focused on proclamation. This section will examine Sung's beliefs that the Holy Spirit transformed many young Christians to become revivalists (especially Lim Puay Huan), stirred religious passions, and also shaped his own

[94] Sung, Diary, ibid., 289, and 304.

[95] Sung, Diary, 311-15.

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proclamation style (content and method) as the revival norm. In sum, Sung understood the Holy Spirit as the Master and power to spread Chinese revivals.

In most of the revival meetings, the audiences, especially the intellectuals, did not like his style of preaching. They were offended, yet were later drawn by his "rude revivalism," as Daniel Bays calls it, which included the coarse attire of a white Chinese gown, and Sung's fiery passion for preaching the gospel of the Cross and repentance.[97] However, the Spirit of God seemed to convict people for repentance even though they disagreed with him and turned away. One of the most obvious converts was Lim Puay Hian in 1933

Lim Puay Hian was a young physician who was not impressed by Sung's attire of a white coarse Chinese gown, with hair that was "shabby and unkempt." He disapproved of Sung's excitement in presenting the message of repentance, and the way Sung "dashed about like one gone crazy."[98] His remarks reveal that Sung's appearance and manner in preaching, reflecting intense emotions, generally did not impress intellectuals.

Lim wanted to have theological dialogue with Sung about faith but received no answer. Three times he turned away from the revival meetings during that week in Swatow in 1933. But he found that he could not eat or sit, and was unable to attend to his patients. He later camped himself near the harbor at his brother's place, but was awakened by the heavenly music which was sung by

[96] Sung, Diary, 72, 77.

[97] Daniel H. Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," 173.

[98] Timothy Tow,in John Sung's Steps: The Story of Lim Puay Hian (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 1976), 47,48. This account is based on Timothy Tow's biography of Lim.

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women and girls going up to the hill to pray for the revival.[99] The third time he went back to the revival meeting, he mocked Sung's laying hands on people, even though many were healed. Lim boasted, "So can I." In the afternoon, he left by boat to return to his hometown, which was seven miles from Swatow. After learning that Sung had not replied to his letter, suddenly a "growing burden of sin began crushing him to death."[100] He ran to his room, knelt down, confessing and weeping. Recalling a preacher's advice to read the Bible when he felt miserable, he turned to Romans 2:4-5. There he found relief that though he was rebellious the grace of God had led him to repentance. Then, he vowed to dedicate his life to God by learning to become a preacher.[101] According to Tow's biography of Lim, he followed Sung's revival steps and held revivals in China and Southeast Asia for another 42 years until his death in 1975.

In his diary, Sung confirmed this story of Lim Puay Hian and mentioned that his father, before his death, had warned the young man of his anti-Christian attitude. Sung himself was convinced that Lim's ministry was truly the work of the Holy Spirit; Lim eventually led more than 37 revivals.[102] This example of Lim's conversion showed Sung that people turn to Christ and respond to the work of the Spirit despite their disapproval of him and his approach to proclamation.

Sung claimed that the Holy Spirit directed him in what to preach, as in the

[99] Ibid., 49-50.

[100] Ibid., 51.

[101] Ibid., 52-64. As Tow further recorded, Lim later became a revivalist. Initially, he worked through a 'Mobile Medical Gospel Team,' and later a full time revival ministry.

[102] Sung, Diary, 145.

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Nanchang revival, and inspired him to proclaim the gospel with metaphors and pictures. He said, "God has hidden many spiritual pictures in my life, and when I preached, all these pictures emerged one after another."[103] As Leung points out he later developed a similar preaching content as Wesley, such as preaching justification (repentance emphasized), Holiness, and Christian life of love. He did not elaborate the doctrine as Wesley did, however; instead he illustrated with witness stories to share spiritual experiences in his sermons.

Sung believed the Holy Spirit shaped his bold style and creative methods of proclamation. One of Sung's blunt and rude proclamations was his open and frank method of calling people for repentance through his famous illustration of open coffin. Timothy Tow, who was Sung's convert during this third period, recalls this as Sung's favorite drama: "From a miniature Chinese coffin, Sung pulled out slips of paper naming every sin from A to Z. His remedy was none other than the precious blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit to cause them to be born anew."[104] Sung recalled in his diary that the open coffin method was a title inspired by God. He realized that the more he preached on opening the coffin, the more he was inspired and felt the power of the Holy Spirit working on people mightily.[105] Sung's daughter Levi recalls another of Sung's popular illustrations.

[103] Ibid., 119.

[104] Tow, Asian Awakening , 31. During my short visit with Rev. Timothy Tow in 1997, this method was brought to my attention as Sung's theme and method of calling people to an awakening to their sins and their need for the blood of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. This finding I owe to the Rev.Tow. Later, I realized this illustration was also recorded in Liu's Anecdotes and Sayings of John Sung, 147-48. [Hereafter the translation of Liu's work from Chinese into English is mine].

[105] Sung, Diary, 99 and Liu, Anecdotes and Savings of John Sung, 148.

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She recalls that her father wore two gowns; on the inside one were pasted the sins of people, and when he took off the outside gown, he showed the sins and the need for repentance and holiness.[106] In both dramatic methods, Sung claimed that the God's Spirit inspired him to call people for repentance.

Not all liked his method of confronting sins and demanding repentance; it evoked some people's anger toward him. On the other hand, many, like Sung, interpreted this as the Spirit's work through proclamation. In Liu's recollection, he described a man who attempted to kill Sung with a gun in his pocket. Nevertheless, when Sung left the chapel, the man could not pull his gun. Later the man claimed to be converted by the work of the Spirit.[107] Sung also attributed the man's conversion to the Holy Spirit.

Leung reflected considerably on Sung's approach to and understanding of proclamation. He argues that what made Sung's revival meetings attractive was his open attack on the social sins of the world, in particular, the smoking of opium, imperialism, westernization, losing faith, and adultery--none of which the missionaries attacked.[108] From his analysis, Sung would intentionally pray for the Holy Spirit to work in people's hearts. When there was no response of repentance, "Sung would pray for the working of the Holy Spirit on the crowd;" until people, generally women, would begin confessing their sins.[109] In addition,

[106] Sung's daughter told me this at my home while she stayed with my family for a short visit in 1997. She also affirms that the open coffin and other concrete objects like seeds and balls were her dad's favorite illustrations of the need for repentance, holiness, and love.

[107] Liu, Anecdotes and Savings of John Sung, 148-49.

[108] Leung, "Revivalists' Influence and Shaping of the Chinese Churches," 131.

[109] Ibid.

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he stressed repentance through passionate concern for lost souls, which led to witnessing as natural behavior after repentance.

Sung also developed several approaches to use with people who had repented. These approaches followed up on proclamation with nurture and pastoral care. One was to have the converts make a list of sins (something missionaries were very opposed to), and have them sign it and give it to Sung for prayer.[110] The second approach Sung used was to organize and lead all converts into evangelistic bands for witnessing on the last day of the revival meeting. He thus trained them to continue helping the local church. This was done for example, in the Nanchang revival. Sung pointed out that after his training in the evangelistic methods and sending the people out for witnessing, the bands would skip dinner and ask for opportunities to share testimony.[111] Sung taught them that confession of sins and witnessing to the gospel are all prerequisites for being filled with the Holy Spirit; they are signs of the new converts' love for Christ.[112] Sung's third approach was to take time to communicate with the leaders and seminarians–one by one or in a group–about mentoring people for confession and witness.[113] Here, we can trace Sung's intentional efforts to have the converts and

[110] John E. Su, Dr. John Sung: The Godly-man (Hong Kong: Heavenly People Depot, 1961), 7; Tow, Asian Awakening, 44-45; Schubert, 66. They observed this as Sung's common approach in response to those newly converted through their experiences with Sung's revivals. On that prayer form they would provide Sung with a name, address, gender, age, photograph, prayers and a testimony.

[111] Sung, Diary, 172.

[112] Sung, ibid., 166, 206. In his fourth period of ministry, he lists the four prerequisites for revivals. They are Prayer, Bible Study, Witness, and Recruitment of revivalists. Repentance was part of prayer.

[113] Liu, Life of John Sung, 197.

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leaders remember their genuine repentence and witness as evidence that theirs was a solid conversion instead of mere enthusiasm; they were encouraged into proclamation themselves.

Perhaps the most unique feature of Sung's proclamation is his use of it for spiritual nurture through the Bible Study Institute. After revival meetings, Sung held Bible Study Institutes for more grounded training in the Bible at certain centralized places. Here he preached and taught the whole Bible within a month. The first Bible Institute was initiated by three sisters who coordinated the event and rented the facilities, including hostels, from the missionary schools from July 10- August 9 in 1935. It was well received with attendance of around six hundred students, teachers, seminarians, and the newly converted.[114]

The most well documented Bible Study Institute which led to a publication of Sung's complete Sermons on the whole Bible, was Sung's second month-long Bible Institute held in Amoy, South China, from July 10 to August 9, 1936. According to Dr. Paul E. Kauffmann of Asian Outreach,

> People gathered at Amoy from all over China and Southeast Asia, including 1,600 participants plus 400 locals, totaling 2,000. These sat at his feet to search the Scriptures from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21, two times a day, 3 ½ hours per session, mornings from 7:30 to 11:00; and evenings 7:00 to 10:30. He went through every one of the 1,189 chapters. Two other Bible Institutes were also held by John Sung, but these were of a shorter duration."[115]

Two other Bible Institutes of shorter duration were held. The first was in

[114] Ibid., 224. The first Bible Institute was for local Chinese potential leaders from China. Later, when the news of this Institute spread, both the participants and John Sung himself recruited Chinese enrollment and participants from Southeast Asia for the big Bible Institute in the following year. Each church also selected its leadership to attend the event.

[115] Tow, Asian Awakening, 57.

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Singapore during the week of December 3-10, 1936, with 538 graduates from Singapore and Malaysia. Another was held in Peiping, in the midst of the Japan invasion, from July 24-August 9, 1937, and was well attended with 1002 graduates and with leadership that represented nine provinces in China.[116]

These Bible Institutes have been studied and the effects interpreted differently by various Chinese and missionary leaders. Liu commented that the greatest accomplishment of the Institute was that only the grace of God could hold meetings of such size and duration. He named the difficult circumstances, which included the Japanese invasion of China which was held off during the Amoy Bible Institute; a new church building in Amoy was just installed and the meal preparation by the mission schools staff and students were made possible; the good weather that held until after the event, the transportation arrangements, and the people's thirst for this training and nurture.[117] Sung, in his farewell speech to the crowd, said that "he has presented them a key to discover more treasure in the Bible."[118] Tow who identifies Sung as his teacher, calls these Bible Institutes "spiritual nurture" where "the seed of the Word was planted in the hearts of God's children."[119]

Sung's emphasis in the Bible studies was clear: "sin, repentance, new

[116] Sung, Diary, 227 and 243. Methodist bishops and the churches from the provinces sponsored both events.

[117] Liu Yih Ling, Life of John Sung, 238-39.

[118] Ibid., 240.

[119] Tow, 57-58.

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birth, and holiness."[120] For example, Sung identified holiness as the theme of every book in the Bible. I also observe that Sung would use different texts of the Old Testament to interpret the New Testament. For example, Sung will use Psalm 23, the Good Shepherd chapter, to interpret the Gospel of John.[121] This affirms Lyall's observation of Sung's hermeneutic, both in preaching and teaching, as spiritualization of the Bible.[122]

In short, Sung believed that the Holy Spirit shaped his proclamation of the gospel. He illustrated that when the central message is Christ, repentance, Spirit-filled holiness, and when the church prays, revivals will continue.

Enthusiasm and Discernment

Sung was not exempt from facing enthusiasm charges and challenges to his discernment of the true Christian experience and the witness of the Holy Spirit. For Sung, his own experience in the mental hospital had subconsciously warned him to disassociate from any display of fanaticism in revivals and the newly converts. This section examines how Sung understood enthusiasm in revivals, and how he intentionally guided churches and the converts to guard against fanatic enthusiasm. Sung did not get involved in arguments about the doctrine of the Spirit as in Wesley; instead his sole argument was to bring about Christians' change of heart and life especially toward witnessing for Christ.

[120] Lyall, 10.

[121] John Sung, Bible Study: The Books of the Old and New Testament (1937; reprint, Amoy: Hall of Grace, 1959), 440-46.

[122] Lyall, 145.

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For Sung, signs of witness of the Holy Spirit and new birth were evident through prayers, confession and witness for Christ. At the experience of the Nanchang revival when the Holy Spirit "fell" on the group, Schubert recalled that Sung was surprised but not pleased. He called the group to stop: "We don't want any fanaticism here." And he asked them to leave and pray quietly.[123] Sung dismissed the group with a benediction. But Schubert recalled that as Sung prayed, the Holy Spirit fell the second time, and everybody began to "pray in chorus," and again a third time so that Sung could no longer stop it.[124] Schubert remarked that Sung seemed not to have ever been in a place where all prayed at one time, though later in his meetings it often happened. Schubert later asked Sung why he stopped the prayer meeting. Sung responded, "I didn't want the missionaries to say, 'That crazy Sung made all the students crazy.'"[125] This reflects that Sung intentionally tried to dissociate his work from fanaticism after his experience in the mental hospital. Interestingly enough, his revival meetings lacked any signs of fits, convulsions, speaking in tongues or other public expressions of the experience of the Holy Spirit, though there were many incidents of miraculous healings and casting out of demons.

Sung's attempts to control the strong emotions in prayers seemed to fail in the Nanchang revival. However, that revival seemed to convince Sung that marks of the Holy Spirit will follow confessional prayers, confession before the congregation, and witness for Christ. Sung understood that the confession and

[123] Schubert, 36-37.

[124] Ibid., 34-35.

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witness for Christ would display the power of the Holy Spirit over against pride and fear of the new converts before the congregation. Later, in Sung's revival meeting, he instructed new Christian converts to write confession stories, then to share them before the congregation. (This will be elaborated later in Chapter 7.) In addition, Sung discouraged speaking in tongues in the revival meetings, though he recorded its occurrence twice in his diary.[126] When Wang Ming Tao, another well-known Chinese revivalist who believed tongue-speaking to be the sign of being filled by the Holy Spirit, questioned Sung about tongue speaking, he answered, "the spiritual gift of witnessing for Christ is more important."[127] Sung's answer reflected his view that witnessing for Christ was a more important mark of the Holy Spirit; and served as his measure for discernment.

Ironically, although Sung tried to dissociate himself from any form of enthusiasm or fanaticism, his style of preaching -- with its elaborate illustrations, jumping up and down in the aisles, in addition to his bad temper towards his colleagues, and his manner which unsettled children and missionaries -- caused some to call him "crazy Sung" as, for example, did Lim Puay Hian. Even though most Chinese could tolerate Sung's hot temper, his fanatic image was evident. Sung's disciples and many Chinese could forgive him and embraced his passion for Christ, believing that it was a critical time for preaching the gospel in the midst of World War II. However, many Western missionaries could not tolerate

[125]Ibid.

[126] Sung, Diary, 109, 137. Sung recorded that he once spoke in tongues during worship and at other times in dreams.

[127] Ibid., 164.

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Sung when he openly named their sins of imperialism, westernization, the social gospel and liberalism, as well as their sins of not living a holy life of confessing sin. Sung reported that Jean Hughes told him that missionaries could not tolerate Sung asking people to make a list of their sins; he blamed that as the cause for closing the door of the Bethel Band.[128] This antagonism closed the door on Sung's work with the missionaries.

In sum, Sung did not develop a doctrine of the witness of the Holy Spirit like Wesley. He emphasized, however, that marks of the Holy Spirit could be traced in one's change of heart and life through their prayers, confession, and witnessing for Christ. Sung's guard against enthusiasm lacked any elaboration on works of goodness, nor discussion of inward and outward holiness as in Wesley. He emphasized the marks of being filled with the Holy Spirit, including bold witnessing for Christ, but did not emphasize an openness to love and respect others. He successfully grounded Chinese Christians in the Bible, prayer life, and witness life, but not in love. He also did not emphasize embracing people with different theological orientations, especially liberal professors or liberal missionaries. Sung later identified his bad temper and harsh criticism of missionaries as sins. He asked his missionary friend William Schubert to forgive him on behalf of the missionaries. He said, "God tells me that I have been too critical of missionaries"; and he added, "[Y]ou left your homes and families, and your own land, and made great sacrifices to preach the Gospel in China, and yet I

[128] Sung, Diary, 153-54.

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criticized. I ask you on behalf of the missionaries, to forgive me."[129] This demonstrated Sung's mature holiness that continued to be open for God's inspiration. He came to the view that the ultimate test of enthusiasm is whether one can love God's children.

Importance of Spiritual Practices

This section examines Sung's view of the importance of spiritual practices for Christian nurture. In Sung's case, Christian nurture is for witness to Christ, revival, and a Spirit-filled holiness. He did not develop a comprehensive understanding of the Holy Spirit as his reason for implementing spiritual practices for all Christians; however, he advocated prayer, Bible study, witness, Chorus praise, and journal writing.

First, Sung believed that spiritual practices would lead to awakening to the indwelling presence of God and lead to conversion. His life followed this pattern, and he believed that the Holy Spirit can fill other people. Leung points out that many of the Chinese revivalists in that era were second generation Christians or preachers' kids.[130]

Second, Sung believed that spiritual practices are to ground Christians' faith in the Bible, and prepare them for witnessing for Christ. Sung named the importance of this nurture as: to understand (to obey, and to proclaim) the gospel, to renew Christian spiritual life, and to proclaim the gospel with spiritual

[129] Schubert, 70.

[130] Leung, "Revivalists' Influence and Shaping of the Chinese Churches," 115. Leung points out that Sung was a Methodist pastor's child, Calvin Chao was raised by a Presbyterian missionary. Marcus Cheng's education was supported by a Swedish missionary society. Wang Ming Dao was raised in the London Missionary School in China. Leung comments that most of them had very negative experiences with missionaries' imperialism.

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power.[131] Ultimately, this would lead to spiritual revival.

Third, Sung believed that spiritual practices are to nurture one to a Spirit-filled holiness that is inseparable from witness for Christ, holy living and love.[132] This conviction was Sung's more mature view of holiness.

Explicitly, in his sermons and Bible studies, Sung taught three main spiritual experiences that need to be nurtured for spiritual awakening and for churches' revivals. Sung believed that the spiritual journey is a Spirit-filled Holiness journey that is made up of three religious experiences. These are: born-again experiences (rebirth), holiness experiences (being filled by the Holy Spirit), and victorious experiences (love for God and lost souls). He called this the Christian's spiritual journey, which is especially clear in his sermon entitled: "The Overview of the Spiritual Journey of Christians."[133] Here he indicated that these three experiences constitute the three basic journeys of a Christian's spiritual life, using biblical images to describe each one. He called the born-again experience the Exodus experience, a coming out from sin. The holiness or sanctification journey is a wilderness experience, an inward struggle to live a life of holiness and faith. Victorious experience is taking the Promised Land (Canaan) in an outward battle to live a life of faith and passion for God's people and mission.[134]

[131] Sung. Diary, 35-36

[132] Sung, Diary, 338.

[133] John Sung, The Sermons of John Sung (Taiwan: Glory Press, 1988),1: 378. [Translation of the sermons are mine].

[134] Ibid., 1: 378-89.

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Leung confirms these three spiritual experiences – rebirth, holiness and victorious life – as major threads in Sung's sermons.[135] He argues that "though Sung's sermons cover many themes, such as various sins, the love of God, the blood of the Cross, repentance and being born again, the filling of the Holy Spirit, witnessing, Christian pilgrimage, and the second coming, but the framework and message of Sung's sermons usually teach these three steps of spiritual life or experience."[136] I agree with Leung that Sung's teachings elaborated more on repentance or the new birth experience and less on holiness and victorious life. I would also agree with Leung that Sung's message of born-again experiences, which often focused solely on confession and repentance, "had shaped Chinese churches' spiritual temperaments and had become ingrained in the hearts of Chinese believers today."[137]

Leung seems to misinterpret John Wesley and misunderstand John Sung in relation to one-time experiences.[138] Drawing from the section about Wesley, I have demonstrated that Wesley's understanding of holiness and rebirth evolved over at least three life stages. For Wesley, holy living is growth in perfect love, including inward and outward holiness. Leung's misinterpretation of Wesley as emphasizing one-time rebirth can help explain why Chinese churches and

[135] Leung, "John Sung's Teaching on Born Again Experience," Jian Dao: A Journal of Bible and Theology, issue 4 (1995):4. [Hereafter translation is mine].

[136] Ibid., 3-4.

[137] Ibid., 2.

[138] Ibid., 11-12. Leung claims that Sung's teaching of rebirth as a particular one time experience was biblically incorrect. This was obviously the influence of John Wesley's understanding of the rebirth experience.

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believers have not fully taught nor been informed of Wesley, nor of Sung's holiness tradition; instead, they seek continually after spiritual revival.

Sung's own spiritual journey was a continuing growth in holiness -- to be filled by the Holy Spirit, to love, and to witness for Christ.[139] From observing Sung's spiritual journey, one can see that he went through these three steps not just once, but repeatedly throughout his life. Sung viewed Exodus as a conversion experience and was a journey bounded with the sins of the world.[140] However, his own conversion or Exodus should not be understood as conversion but as a spiritual awakening because it included his bondage with sins, and his search for guidance and victorious life.[141] What he described on the night in February 10, 1927, was an experience of someone who had believed in God and salvation and was blessed with a holy visit of spiritual awakening. On that night he encountered three religious experiences: salvation on the cross, the sanctification of the Spirit, and also the revelation of his mission. Not only were his sins made clear, he was shown the path to holiness and mission. One could argue that this was a night of his baptism of the Holy Spirit when he was blessed to perceive spiritual visions of his future ministry.

Although Sung could point to such dramatic moments, he believed that the Holy Spirit was in his life and ministry in a continuing holiness journey. For example, Sung frequently recalled Bible stories that he had heard from

[139] Sung, Sermons, 1:379-82. Sung used the analogy of the biblical journey in Exodus, the wilderness, and Canaan to describe this holiness journey.

[140] Ibid., 379.

[141] Ibid., 1:379-82.

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missionaries as a child. Also, his later wilderness experience in America confirmed more of his yearning to have a continuous spiritual experience of God and to follow God's will. The wilderness was part of his long journey of spiritual awakening and holy living. Sung believed that spiritual awakening comes through the grace of God's guidance and the human response of repentance and obedience, as in his own mental hospital experience. He also believed that victorious life could come through revivals.

In sum, Sung understood spiritual life as ongoing, and he understood spiritual practices as awakening people's souls for conversion, affirming Christians' faith to witness for Christ and inspiring a Spirit-filled holiness. The seeds for this continuous victorious life are repentance, prayer, Bible Study, witness, and Chorus praise, which I will illustrate in Chapter 7.

Conclusions

From the above observations, it is evident that Sung saw himself guided and filled by the Holy Spirit. He believed that the Spirit did speak to the Chinese experience through preaching and healing ministries.

Sung understood that God planted yearnings in people for salvation, close relationship with God, assurance of faith, a sense of God's call, and an experience of being filled the Holy Spirit. He also believed that God blessed his ministry to respond to those yearnings, revealing the Spirit to him through prayer, Scripture, mission, and vision.

Further, Sung understood that the experience of the Holy Spirit can take the form of dramatic turns. Those turns may be bigger than he or any young

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convert can understand. His understanding served as an imperative for him to provide solid spiritual nurture, grounding Christians in the Bible, and enabling them to love, to build up each other, to witness, and to be open to God's inspiration.

As to supernatural experience and healing, Sung understood that the marks of supernatural experiences were displayed in people's response of confession, witness, revival, and miraculous healing; they were not displayed in supernatural phenomena of fits, trances, and convulsion as with Wesley. He believed that inviting the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was part of Christian holy living, often occurring in prayer, confession, witness, and Bible study.

As to proclamation, Sung understood that, when proclamation centered on the message of Christ, and when the church prayed for being filled by the Holy Spirit, God's spirit would inspire him and revivals would follow.

Sung's view of enthusiasm and discernment was focused on the marks of the Holy Spirit. Sung was critical of enthusiasm although he often showed strong emotions of enthusiasm himself. At the same time, he often taught that the test of holiness is really the love of God and people.

We can conclude that Sung understood the Holy Spirit as the main contributing power for his life and ministry, for revival, and for Spirit-filled holiness. This view can provide much insight and inspiration for Chinese churches. In the next part, I will focus on the actual models of Wesley and Sung for spiritual revival and Christian education. By doing so, I will create a context for drawing inspirations for a Spirit-centered education.

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PART FOUR

MODELS FOR SPIRITUAL REVIVAL AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Part Four is a study of John Wesley's and John Sung's models for spiritual revival and Christian education. The central question is what models they have provided for spiritual revival and Christian education. To respond to this question, I will explore their explicit spiritual practices and implicit approaches to Christian education. The discoveries can inform a Spirit-centered education.

From the previous chapter that focused on John Wesley's and John Sung's understandings of the Holy Spirit, one common assumption was evident. Both affirmed that God's Spirit awakens people to the awareness of their sins, the grace of God, and the experience of God's deliverance and healing. Individually they were each led to spiritual awakening, and in each case, the church collectively was led to revivals. They both came to believe that it is possible to create an environment of spiritual nurture and pastoral care through active spiritual practices. These practices open people's hearts to the Holy Spirit.

The word *model* is chosen to describe Wesley's and Sung's educational theory and practice. Webster defines model as "someone or a detailed pattern set before one for guidance and imitation."[1] Adding to this idea, Mary-Elizabeth Moore sees a model as "an explanation of experience that is always open to reconstruction in light of new experience, revelation, or analysis."[2] In light of

[1] "Model," Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.

[2] Mary Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change, 19.

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these definitions, a model is a perspective on theory and practice that embodies continuity with the past and allows imitation. Further, with new experiences and continuing reflection, a model can potentially change and provide guidance for the future. Given these understandings and using the observations of Chapters 4 and 5, I will examine the spiritual practices that Wesley and Sung explicitly advocated for spiritual revival, including their implicit teachings for Christian education. I will also evaluate the limitations of their views of Christian education.

Chapters 6 and 7 will follow a similar framework, except that John Wesley used the language of the means of grace for spiritual practices and he elaborated more practices. As implied by his teachings, John Wesley envisioned Christian education as disciplined living for people of all ages, while John Sung took the revival as a norm for Christian education. Chapter 6 will examine Wesley's model, and Chapter 7 will examine Sung's. The two men are both similar and contrasting, offering much texture and color for spiritual revival and Christian education. The intention of the examination in Part IV will be to zoom in on their inspiration for a Spirit-centered education.

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CHAPTER 6

John Wesley's Model for Spiritual Revival and Christian Education

For John Wesley, spiritual awakening, faith in Christ, and inward and social holiness could be nurtured and restored. His awakening to holiness was not a one-time instantaneous event, but a life-long process toward holiness or perfection of love. Based on his convictions, in this chapter, I look to Wesley's spiritual revival and Christian education for seeds of a Spirit-Centered Christian education. In particular, I attempt to illustrate how Wesley invited the experience of the Holy Spirit in his spiritual practices of prayer, Scripture reading, Lord's Supper, bands and class meetings, visitation, and hymn-singing. These practices are not only spiritual disciplines for nurturing faith and Christian knowledge, but are practices that intentionally invite the experience of the Holy Spirit. Without connecting Wesley's own understanding of the Holy Spirit and his spiritual modeling, we will not understand how, for him, these experiences are seeds that evoke passion for the love of God and mission.

Wesley insisted that the means of grace are fundamental instruments for continual growth in holiness and Christian perfection. The means of grace, which I will illustrate in this chapter, constitute an individual's continuous response to personal sins and the sins of the society. Even though Wesley did not speak directly about Christian education, he modeled the way of holiness, which is a primary concern of Christian education and which provides a means for turning individuals to the ideal of holiness that he identified with primitive Christianity.

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In this chapter, I explore Wesley's interpretations of the means of grace as the explicit spiritual practices that nurture spiritual life and holiness. Then I will evaluate how these practices represent an implicit Christian education theory, with emphases on communicating grace and disciplined living for all ages.

Wesley's Model for Spiritual Revival

Wesley's model for spiritual revival is best understood through his own conviction of the means of grace whereby believers may continue to grow in grace and holiness. Wesley affirmed a Spirit-led model, by which one seeks the Spirit's guidance, confirmation, and witness. Through this, the whole Church community may continue to grow in holiness and perfect love. Wesley's critics considered his instituted means of grace to be a significant religious practice, beyond the preaching of Christ, proving that Wesley advocated salvation by works instead of by faith alone. However, Wesley argued that these practices did not earn righteousness but are means to receive, in an ongoing fashion, God's promised grace.[1] For Wesley, all of the ordinances of God are means for perfection and holiness as Wesley disputed with Moravian quietism.

Wesley integrated the traditional means of grace based on his own supernatural experiences, and he encouraged people to grow in holiness through a life-long commitment to seeking God. Thus, one does not become holy simply by believing, but by striving daily to be open to God's guidance. This constitutes what I am calling a Spirit-led model of holiness, and it can be structured around

[1] Wesley, "The Means of Grace," in Works, Bicentennial Edition, 1: 390-93.

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the instituted and prudential means of grace.

The Instituted Means of Grace

Wesley advocated five means of grace, exemplified in the life of Jesus: Prayer, Scripture, The Lord's Supper, Fasting, and Christian conference or conversation.[2] Wesley also understood "these practices to be ordinances, prescribed by God" in order to claim the promises of God, to expect guidance from the Holy Spirit, and to shape and direct us for holy living.[3] Out of the five, Wesley considered prayer, Scripture and the Lord's Supper to be the chief means of grace, believing they were "ordained by God as the ordinary channels of conveying grace to the souls of men."[4] Based on their significance to Wesley, I will examine only these three practices -- prayer, scripture reading and the Lord's Supper -- and highlight their connections with spiritual awakenings.

Prayer Practice

Wesley emphasized the significance of prayer in several ways in his teaching. First, prayer is "the express direction of our Lord Himself." Said Wesley, "Those who desire the grace of God are to wait for it" in this means.[5] This implies that Wesley saw prayer as a means for receiving the grace of God

[2] John Wesley, "The Minutes of Several Occasions between the Reverend Wesley and Others," in The Works of John Wesley, ed. Thomas Jackson, 3rd ed. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1972; reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986), 8: 323-24. See also Steve Harper, Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition (Nashville: Upper Room, 1983), 9, 19; Blevins, Wesley and the Means of Grace, 175-227. Blevins elaborates on how these means of grace are helpful approaches to understanding much of Wesley's theology and educational assumptions.

[3] Blevins, 180.

[4] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 1:381.

[5] Ibid., 1: 384.

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and God's direction; Christians can, therefore, expect prayers to be fulfilled through waiting upon God.

Second, prayer is a means for revival and victory in Christian life. Wesley claimed,

> God does nothing but in answer to prayer; and even they who have been converted to God, without praying for it themselves (which is exceeding rare), were not without the prayers of others. Every new victory, which a soul gains, is the effect of a new prayer.[6]

In the above comment, Wesley claimed that God converts people through prayers, and he defined victory as soul winning through revivals. From the previous observation of supernatural phenomena displayed in gatherings and their connection with intercessory prayers, the experiences of victory are new birth, deliverance, healing, and restoring joy and love in believers. Prayer takes people to renewal, revival, victory, and to the heart of God.

Third, prayer opens people to God and the world. Marjorie Suchocki argues the significance of intercessory prayers for Wesley. She states that "prayers join us not only to God," but intercessory prayer, "weaves the other's needs into who we are."[7] Suchocki says that prayer for Wesley was openness not only to personal transformation, but also to the world, to self, and to community.[8]

[6] Wesley, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," Works, Jackson ed., 11:437.

[7] Marjorie Suchocki, "The Perfection of Prayer," in Rethinking Wesley's Theology for Contemporary Methodism, ed. Randy L. Maddox (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1998), 51.

[8] Ibid., 56-59.

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Undergirding this, Wesley saw that through prayer we flow into a deep union with God, like rivers flow to the sea.[9] Prayers, and the love and good works they inspire in us, return us to God. In Wesley's words,

> The sea is an excellent figure of the fullness of God, and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return into the sea, so the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous return into God, to live there in [God's] eternal repose.[10]

This is that deepest of unions whereby the grace of God works within us to bring forth holiness, the fullness of God, the heart of God, and perfection in love. Prayer then is a channel that connects us to God, self, and the world.

Wesley recognized two forms of prayer, the extemporary prayer and the written prayer, for both personal and corporate practice. The first form of prayer is extemporary prayer or a spontaneous prayer in the morning. Richard Heitzenrater observes that Wesley used one form of extemporary prayer, known as ejaculatory prayer, while teaching at Oxford. This prayer, a short sentence prayer of praise, was offered at the beginning of every hour.[11] It indicates Wesley's practice of unceasing prayer and his complementing of the church practice from the Book of Common Prayer with spontaneous prayer.

Wesley cherished the printed prayers of the church, which he demonstrated on several occasions. First, he liked to collect his own and other people's personal prayers.[12] Second, he treasured the church prayers and liturgy

[9] Ibid., 59.

[10] Wesley, Works , Jackson ed., 11:435.

[11] Heitzenrater, The Elusive Mr. Wesley, 1:60; and Blevins, 182. Blevins also cited Heitzenrater's work.

[12] Harper, 75, n.11; as cited in Blevins, 182.

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in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*. Frank Baker, Wesley's biographer, said that, for Wesley, "*The Book of Common Prayer* was only just less inspired than the Bible."[13] Wesley used the printed prayers as a guide, maintaining ties to the Anglican Church in so doing.

Wesley also rewrote printed prayers for devotional practice.[14] The fact that he later expanded this publication into a series of written prayers shows that Wesley valued the instructional significance of written prayers for guiding and nurturing spiritual awakenings. A sample of the daily prayer themes shows Wesley's intention to provide rich meditation topics for prayer. One sample states:

> Sunday--/The Love of God; Monday--/Love of our Neighbor; Tuesday--/Humility; Wednesday--/Mortification; Thursday--/Resignation and Meekness; Friday--/Mortification (see Wed.) Saturday--/Thankfulness.[15]

Wesley instituted prayer practice as a daily rhythm with a reflection on basic Christian themes. Later, for the mature Christian, prayer could come as a natural response to the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Further, Christians could invite spiritual awakening through their prayers. Wesley was eager to teach the community to open themselves to God's Spirit through daily prayer, worship, and gathering. As in this Hymn, the direct invitation to God's Spirit reads:

[13] Frank Baker, John Wesley and the Church of England (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 234; and Blevins, 182.

[14] Harper, 113; Blevins, 183 who cited Harper's work.

[15] Wesley, "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day of the Week," Works, Jackson ed., 11: 201-37; and Blevins, 184 who cited Wesley's works.

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Spirit of faith, come down,
Reveal the things of God,
And make us the Godhead down,--
Spirit of faith, descend, and show
The virtue of his name;
The grace which all may find,
The saving power impart,
And testify to all mankind,
And speak in every heart![16]

For Wesley, the seeds for spiritual awakening come through formal prayers, spontaneous prayers, intercessory prayers, daily reflection on the grace of God, and an invitation to God's Spirit.

Scripture

The significance of Scripture as a means of grace can be understood in several ways. First, Scripture conveys the voice of God. Wesley discerned the voice of God through Scripture in times of doubt. The Scripture confirmed and directed him in the experience of grace.

Second, Scripture can lead toward wisdom and good works. Wesley indicated that Scripture "is a means whereby God not only gives, but also confirms and increases true wisdom." Wesley added that "we learn from ... Holy Scripture which are able to make the wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus ... to the end that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."[17]

[16] Franz Hildebrandt and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, ed. A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodist. Vol. 7 of The Works of John Wesley, Bicentennial ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983) 182-83, in Hymns 83:1-3 and 19-24.

[17] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 1: 387-88.

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Scripture, then, is a path toward perfection. Perfection, as inspired in Scripture, is a "renewal of the soul after the image of God," the mind and character of Christ, and "true holiness."[18] For Wesley, then, Scripture is a means to heaven. He says,

> I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God: Just hovering over the great gulf; till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity? I want to know one thing, -- the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way: For this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me that book of God! I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri* [A man of one book]. I sit down alone: Only God is here. In his presence I open, I read his book; for this end, to find the way to heaven.[19]

This citation echoes Wesley's trust in the Bible for guiding a journey to heaven.

Finally, Scripture was Wesley's guide when confronted with challenges in life, as in his search for the witness of the Spirit or for daily guidance. For Wesley, it was very important to learn the manner of salvation through scripture. Therefore, it was crucial also to understand the way of interpretation. In Wesley's interpretation of the Bible, he used the Bible as a whole to help interpret particular passages. As Dean Gray Blevins points out, when confronted with difficult passages, "Wesley would first turn to divine guidance, then he would compare the text with similar parallel passages, meditate upon the text, and, after that, consult

[18] Rubert Davies, ed., The Methodist Societies: History, Nature and Design. Vol. 9 of The Works of John Wesley, Bicentennial ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980; reprint, Nashvile: Abingdon Press, 1989), 527.

[19] Wesley, "Preface," Works, ibid., 1:104-05.

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the commentaries of those who are 'experienced in the things of God.'"[20] This hermeneutical method is prior to modern text criticism, but he compared various texts within the Bible, in the various commentaries; and sought divine inspiration.

Henry Knight observed that Wesley saw Scripture primarily as an "reflective instrument" by which faith and religious experiences would be shaped through reflection. Knight states, "Scripture portrays the identity of God and a corresponding picture of the Christian life. Wesley does not use terms such as story or narrative, but he expresses the single intention of scripture in such phrases as the analogy of faith or the general or whole tenor of scripture."[21] This claim simply highlights Wesley's openness to discerning life as a whole from the study of Scripture as a whole.

In summary, for Wesley, Scripture was critical for seeing the light of God. Therefore, Wesley saw how very crucial it is for Christians to have a discipline of dwelling in the whole breadth and depth of the Bible. Wesley provided a number of suggestions for persons reading scripture individually:

1. Establish a little time in the morning and evening for reading.
2. Read each time sections of both Old and New Testament.
3. Read purposefully in order to know and do the will of God.

[20] Blevins, 190; and Wesley, Explanatory Notes on the Old Testament (Bristol: William Pine in Wine-Street, 1765; reprint, Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, 1975), 1:viii; Wesley, Works, Jackson ed., 5:3-4. In his OT Notes, Wesley writes, "The general rule of interpreting Scripture is this: the literal sense of every text is to be taken, if it is not contrary to some other texts; but in that case the obscure text is to be interpreted by those which speak more plainly."

[21] Henry H. Knight, The Presence of God in the Christian Life: A Contemporary Understanding of John Wesley's Means of Grace. Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1987 (Ann Arbor, UMI, 1990), 219.

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4. Relate the passages to the broader messages of the Bible and also to basic Christian doctrines.

5. Give time for "serious and earnest" prayer prior to reading.

6. Constantly ask how the passage might be applied to life, either in praise of God, contrition for sin, or correction for prior actions. Then resolve to act immediately on "the light you then receive."[22] These suggestions reveal that reading Scripture is inseparable from prayer in seeking God's guidance.

In his sermons, Wesley followed these guidelines, teaching a text and connecting it with a train of witness within the Scriptures. He anticipated that religious experience could flow through Scripture to guide and shape religious life. Scripture provides a solid foundation from which to discern the witness of the Spirit. Scripture serves as a ground to discern the voice of God, to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit toward true holiness.

The Lord's Supper

For Wesley, the Lord's Supper is a means to increase our desire for God's grace. It is through "the remembrance of the death of Christ," that we recall that "our sins are grievous to us, the burdens of them are intolerable." Wesley said, "If we truly desire the grace of God, let us eat of the bread and drink of the cup." The Lord's Supper is a "visible means whereby God conveys into our souls all that spiritual grace, that righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[23]

[22] Wesley, Explanatory Notes, 1:ix; Blevins, 192; This is Blevins' citation of Wesley's Notes.

[23] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 1: 389-90.

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Ultimately, the Lord's supper is a means to attain communion with God, Christ the Savior, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Recognizing the Lord's Supper as another means of grace, Wesley regularly participated in the Eucharist and encouraged Methodists to do the same, even to the point of placing the elements at the bed of the dying. As an Anglican priest he followed the *Book of Common Prayer* and its liturgy. Wesley was connected to the Church of England and honored its traditions, but he emphasized the Lord's Supper as an active means of grace.

During a love feast and watchnight service one New Year's Eve in 1739, the Spirit of God came mightily on Wesley and sixty other Christians. I see that as a clear demonstration of the Spirit's blessing of the church community with no restriction of space and place. The Church will be blessed as long as these means of grace -- prayer, Scripture, and the Lord's Supper -- are honored and used. With such an intentional invitation to God's Spirit, spiritual awakenings will follow, whether experienced dramatically or felt quietly.

The Prudential Means of Grace

The prudential means of grace are those practices that touch people where they are most needed. The common prudential means of grace, summarized in Henry Knight, are the following:

> 1.Particular rules or actions of holy living. 2. Class and Band meetings. 3. Prayer meetings, covenant services, watch night services, love feasts. 4. Visiting the sick. 5. Doing all the good one can, doing no harm. 6. Reading devotional classics and all edifying literature.[24]

These means of grace point to several contexts in which people normally find

[24] Henry Knight, diss., 7; cited in Blevins, 209.

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themselves. Grace can be experienced in a way that occurs naturally in different situations. Wesley also established select societies to provide a training ground for leaders. His penitent bands were designed to counsel and support those who had fallen from grace.[25] Wesley created contexts where persons could be involved in solving their own problems.

To illustrate the contexts for spiritual awakenings, I will present Wesley's most well received structures for spiritual awakening and living: bands and class meetings, visitation, and hymn singing.

Bands and Class Meetings

Wesley's bands and class meetings were effective settings for the development of lay leadership and the nurture of spiritual awakening. In the small groups, members were given opportunities for mutual prayer support, confession, witness, and care for each others' souls.

Wesley recorded that bands were basically a voluntary group of three to five believers of the same sex, gathering for prayers and confession.[26] Wesley's "Rules of the Band Society," written in 1738, as noted by Ann Taves, offered the following points: 1) the focus was to be on confession and prayers; 2) members were instructed to speak freely the state of their souls and any temptations since the last meeting; 3) the band served as 'locus' for personal and intimate

[25] David Michael Henderson, John Wesley's Instructional Groups, Ph.d. diss., Indiana University, 1980 (Ann Arbor, UMI, 1980), 105-86. In Henderson's dissertation, he provides a psychological/educational analysis of Wesley's instructional groups, showing that they are in fact designed for meeting the specific needs of the group.

[26] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 19:47. Wesley noted in his journal that men and women were initiated after their experience of 'witness of the Spirit' to meet regularly for prayers and confession.

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confession especially for those not accustomed to keeping a spiritual journal.[27] The elements of prayer and confession were vital in walking believers through the experience of God's pardon, toward inward holiness and social holiness.

Bands were sometimes created during times of revival. The sensitivity to the witness of the Spirit and the confidence of being equipped with the power of the Spirit were developed through disciplines of prayer and confession to God and each other. The bands sometimes functioned as a voluntary group to pray with Wesley during his visits and during outbreaks of supernatural works of the Holy Spirit. The bands provided a place to gather for the pursuit of a deeper Christian life, soul winning, and holiness.

Class meetings grew from the bands and became the more enduring, common form. The classes consisted of 8-12 members. All members of a society had the option to join a class meeting. There were at least three characteristics of class meetings. First, an important requirement for membership was openness to mutual support and accountability. This assured the group of a commitment to spiritual fellowship, discipleship, and honest engagement with others in the class. Through the initial screening, class members were committed to respond openly regarding spiritual matters of forgiveness, the peace of God, witness of the Spirit, and love of God in hearts and actions.[28] This element of mutual accountability

[27] Taves, 64; and Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 9: 267.

[28] Taves, 64.; Henderson, 91-102; Chul Baik, Christian Religious Education for the Formation of Full Humanity, 225-26. A sample of the screening questions can be found in Taves and Henderson.

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implicitly teaches that mutual prayer, life-sharing, and guidance are part of a continual journey toward holiness.

The second characteristic of class meetings was the emergence of lay leadership. This leadership was usually seen as an extension of Wesley. Leaders were given the opportunity to assume spiritual and pastoral care for colleagues and class members.[29] Henderson argues that this practice was largely "responsible for the practicality and down to earth usefulness of Methodism for more than a century."[30] This leadership pattern, arising from Wesley's genius and his belief in the grace of God, continues to function in many Third World churches.[31] However, in Chinese churches, the class meeting was modified, and called fellowship meetings with similar age groups, to nurture discipleship. Only recently has this mutual nature of spiritual nurture begun to be practiced.

Third, the class meeting was a heterogeneous group open to diversity in gender, age, social status, and spiritual readiness. Hence, it breaks through leadership traditions based on gender and class. It provides equal settings to nurture holiness and spiritual renewal. As Chul Baik points out, it indeed leads to "social transformation in a new structure of society."[32] Here, leadership was based largely on religious maturity.

From this brief overview of the bands and classes, we see the variety of

[29] David Lowes Watson, The Early Methodist Class Meeting: Its Origins and Significance (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1985), 98; and Taves, 64.

[30] Henderson, 193.

[31] Baik, 227.

[32] Ibid.

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contexts and forms that nurtured spiritual awakening. The structure of groups not only nurtures spiritual holiness and cultivates spiritual leadership of men and women, but it gradually influences the larger community to focus on the witness of the Spirit, and to be less preoccupied with differences of gender and class.

Visitation

The study of Wesley's model for spiritual revival is not complete without the study of Wesley's practices of visitation. For Wesley, visitation was a natural outgrowth of the concern members had for each other, the sick, the poor, and also prisoners. It is a practice reflecting the marks of Methodists as "simply love of God and love of neighbor."[33] Wesley modeled Christian charity through this broad sense of visitation. James Lackington points out that Wesley was "charitable to an extreme" and that Wesley never denied giving out relief to a poor person who asked him; he sometimes gave ten or twenty pounds to needy tradesmen.[34] Lackington was astonished that "Wesley could not walk the few yards from his study to the pulpit without giving out coins to the poor people of his society."[35]

For Wesley, visiting the poor and sick constituted taking up the cross and the life of the Lord, as he told Miss March, "Go and see the poor and the sick in their own poor little hovels. Take up your cross, woman! Remember the faith!

[33] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 9: 35.

[34] James Lackington, Memoirs of James Lackington, in Forty-seven Letters to a Friend (London: 1794), 176; and as cited in Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 252. This section of visitation owes insights and findings to Heitzenrater.

[35] Lackington, ibid., Heitzenrater, ibid.

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Jesus went before you, and will go with you."[36] He further advised Miss March not to confine conversation with "genteel and elegant people" for he could not discover "a precedent for it in the life of the Lord or any of his apostles."[37] Christians are to incarnate the love of Christ in visitation:

> to visit the poor, the widow, the sick, the fatherless in their affliction,--they are bought with the blood of Christ. It is true this is not pleasing to flesh and blood. There are a thousand circumstances usually attending it with shock the delicacy of out nature, or rather of our education. But yet the blessing which follows this labour of love will more than balance of the cross.[38]

Wesley advocated different methods in the visitation practice. For visitation of the sick, he appointed twelve persons as "visitors of the sick" for their area, and Wesley counseled them on Tuesday evening.[39] For the poor, he raised money, as in the United Society's buying "needful clothing" for 360 poor people the day before Good Friday.[40] For the members of the society, he instituted a plan to visit each member of the society from house to house starting from one end of the town. He claimed that " I know of no branch of the pastoral office, which is of greater importance than this" and he admitted that few could "undertake it, even the preachers."[41] This statement revealed the significance of

[36] John Telford, Letters of John Wesley, 8 vols. (London: Epworth Press, 1931), 153; and Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 252.

[37] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 26: 207; and Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 252.

[38] Wesley, ibid., 26: 208-209; and Heitzenrater, ibid.

[39] Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists, 128.

[40] Wesley, Journal, 3:125.

[41] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 22:396.

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visitation practices for pastoral care; it also implied that not only the preachers provided pastoral care but also the lay people.

In summary, the practices of visitation incarnate Christian love through caring and loving the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. Philanthropy is also part of Christian mission; Christian faith includes good works of caring.

Hymn Singing

In addition to the above practices, group or congregational hymn singing also played a vital role in Methodist services. Wesley noted that "Methodism was born in song."[42] Rack remarks that the structure of the early hymnal displayed the Methodist plan of salvation: "Exhorting Sinners to Return to God," "Describing the Pleasantness of Religion," "The Goodness of God," heaven, hell, etc. This was followed by "Praying for a Blessing," "Distinguishing formal and inward religion"; praying for repentance, for sinners convinced of sin; for believers rejoicing, fighting and (very important) "groaning for full redemption (perfection)."[43] This organization of the hymnal describes the religious path to holiness. We can conclude that Wesley aimed at demonstrating a Spirit-led model of holiness through music.

In conclusion, the practices of prayer, Scripture, the Lord's Supper, bands and Class meetings, visitation, and hymn singing are seeds for spiritual awakenings. This model provides a balanced spirituality that nurtures both

[42] Wesley, Works, Bicentenniel ed., 7:1.

[43] Rack, 414.

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inward and outward holiness.

Purpose of Christian Education

Wesley did not explicitly use the term Christian education, but he structured a framework of religious practices to nurture the Christian experience of holy living. The process that guides and nurtures Christian faith in the grace of God toward holy living is, by nature, Christian education. The grace of God and the experience of God are in the center of Christian education.

Wesley did at points explicitly address Christian education and implicitly define the purpose of Christian education; that is the focus of this section. I hope to reclaim the significance and nature of Christian education in light of his work, and to evaluate the fullness and limitation of Wesley's contribution to Christian education.

Christian Education as Communicating Grace and Nurturing Holiness

We encounter several difficulties in analyzing Wesley's interpretation of the purpose of Christian education in its relation to all age groups. One difficulty is that scholars may focus on bands and classes, and conclude that religion is an adult concern. On the other hand, scholars may focus on Wesley's work with Kingswood School and conclude that Christian religious education has to do primarily with children.[44] Therefore, scholars conclude that religion is for adults; but Christian education is for children.

[44] Joseph Seaborn, John Wesley's Use of History as a Ministerial and Educational Tool, Th.D. Diss., Boston University School of Theology, 1984 (Ann Arbor, UMI, 1990), 74-75; Alfred H. Body, John Wesley and Education (London: Epworth Press, 1936), 46-47. Seaborn's study focused on the concern for adults, whereas Body's work focused on Wesley's education as the concern for children.

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John W. Prince, who wrote explicitly about Wesley's treatment on Christian religious education in 1926, states that the difficulty lay in combining Wesley's role as evangelist and educator.[45] He proposes viewing Wesley as an evangelistic educator. Prince links his argument by saying that "[Wesley] did have a connection with his desire to save sinners," and Wesley "assumes the purpose of education of children is for their salvation."[46] Prince insists, "[T]raining must be a converting process,"[47] and draws on the doctrines of repentance and salvation as a framework for Wesley's religious education. In so doing, he limits Wesley's emphasis on Christian education to preparing children for conversion. This is a narrow understanding of conversion as well as of Christian education. Looked at from this evangelical point of view, education theory is also limited to children.

The above discussion illustrates the difficulty in determining the degree to which interpretations of Wesley's theory of Christian religious education are authentically Wesleyan or only a reflection of the interpreter. Unfortunately, the above ideas seem to reflect the theories of Prince's time rather than Wesley's, and they are focused primarily on childhood religion.

Dean Gray Blevins shows that Prince understood Wesley's theory of religious education to be mainly a theory for children's education. Little is discussed in Prince about adult group formation; the focus on adult group

[45] John Prince, Wesley on Religious Education: A Study of John Wesley's Theories and Methods of the Education of Children in Religion (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1926).

[46] Ibid., 10.

[47] Ibid., 101.

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formation was mainly restricted to evangelism. Blevins also criticizes Prince's work for being deficient in regard to social action as an important element of adult religious education.[48] From this discussion, we see that the common misinterpretation of Wesley was due to the neglect of historical and cultural analysis and distorted claims about Wesley's theories. Blevins demonstrates that most theological interpretations of Wesley's purpose of Christian education fall somewhere between the two poles of evangelism and social action, between conversion and preparing children to conversion.[49] This, he explains, not only dichotomizes Wesley but also misses the holistic view of Christian education.

I will argue that, if we insist on using this dualistic mindset, we will not only misunderstand Wesley's philosophy of Christian education, but also will entirely miss his emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians. We will not be able to grasp his concern for holiness and his views on how the Spirit works in people of all ages. For Wesley, God's grace and Christian holiness are important for all people. Randy L. Maddox points out that Wesley offered "a major integration of the primacy of grace into his enduring concern for Christian holiness."[50] His reflection implies that the purpose of Christian religious education is to communicate grace and to nurture holy living.

[48] Blevins, 120-21.

[49] Ibid., 102-03.

[50] Randy L. Maddox,. Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994), 20.

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Christian Education as Disciplined Living for all Ages

With convictions about God's grace and holy living, Wesley encouraged disciplined living for all ages and in diverse contexts. In four texts, Wesley defined his views on Christian religious education, all written and preached in 1783, the later period of his life. Out of these four texts, the sermon "On Family Religion" communicates that teaching religion is a family experience. The other three texts reflect Wesley's passionate belief that training in holiness begins in childhood and is done largely through disciplined practices.

In Wesley's sermon "On Family Religion" (May 1783), he emphasized the importance of family religion for the continuity of Methodist revivals. "If family religion be neglected -- this mark (revival) does not hold with regard to the present stance."--- [51] What Wesley meant by family religion is that the whole household serves the Lord. The role of adults is to lead family worship, to train children in strict spiritual disciplines, and to model service to the Lord by loving one another, including children and servants. What Wesley said here is that family religion motivates and nurtures the whole family.

Wesley believed that family worship should start as soon as any adult "has the witness in himself," referring to the witness of the Holy Spirit.[52] The adults are to "train children up in all holiness, and fit them for the enjoyment of God in eternity."[53] This assumes that adults are initiated by their experience of grace and

[51] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 3: 335.

[52] Ibid., 3: 336. Wesley referred to this family worship as spiritual worship.

[53] Ibid., 3: 337.

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seek guidance of the Holy Spirit in this family religion. This training involves early, frequent, and patient instruction of the things of God. By early, Wesley, meant literally beginning at dawn. By frequently, he suggested three times a day, using the language of the children. Instruction would be done by parents. In all of this Wesley said that the best teacher is still the Holy Spirit, for "whenever the Holy Ghost teaches, there is no delay in learning."[54] Wesley claimed that this family religion is the main reason that Methodism's revivals flourish, because the family allows the witness of the Spirit to lead them in worship and service.

The second and third text on education for children is found in Thomas Jackson's *Works of John Wesley*. In "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children," Wesley showed that education is the way to lead children into the life of perfect love with the help of divine grace. In his words,

> The bias of nature is set the wrong way: education is designed to set it right. This, by the grace of God, is to turn the bias from self-will, pride, anger, revenge, and the love of the world, to resignation, lowliness, meekness, and the love of God.[55]

In this account, Christian education aims at setting Christians right with God and with all people. It implies strict disciplines and the grace of God to guide.

The third text is "A Plain Account of Kingswood School." In this text, Wesley said that the required goals and methodology of Christian education are formal training of reason, scripture, tradition, and practical experience of holiness. In his words,

[54] Ibid.,3: 340-41.

[55] Wesley, "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children," in Works, Jackson ed., 13: 476.

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> --Our first point was, to answer the design of Christian education, by forming their minds, through the help of God, to wisdom and holiness, by instilling the principles of true religion, speculative and practical, and training them up in the ancient way, that they might be rational, scriptural Christians.[56]

In this account, it describes clearly that the purpose of Christian education is to instill the principles of true religion, to train Christians in the primitive Christianity--the ancient way, and with the help of God connect them in practical holiness.

The fourth text is the sermon "On The Education of Children" (July 1783). Albert Outler remarks on this text that Wesley showed a retrospective on his own Christian nurture in the Epworth parsonage and his early encounter with William Law.[57] In his belief, parents and teachers are to bend or break the will of the child to make them agreeable to their parents, teachers, and therefore to God. Wesley showed them to be disciplinarians. The advice that Wesley offered parents and teachers is:

> A wise parent, on the other hand, should begin to break their will the first moment it appears. In the whole art of Christian education there is nothing more important than this. The will of the parent is to the little child in the place of the will of God.[58]

In this account, Wesley reflected more on strict disciplines and less on his theology of grace to allow God's Spirit to shape children.

In the same sermon, Wesley quoted at length from William Law. He

[56] Wesley, "A Short Account of the School in Kingswood near Bristol," in Works, Jackson ed., 13: 293.

[57] Wesley, "On the Education of Children,"in Works, Bicentennial ed., 3: 347.

[58] Ibid., 3: 354.

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agreed with Law's view that education is to restore a man's "rational perfection."[59] And Christian education should have no other end but to "teach them how to think, and judge, and act according to the strictest rules of Christianity."[60] Law further explained that the goal for Christian schools then is "to begin students their life in the spirit of Christianity, in such abstinence, humility, sobriety, and devotion as Christianity requires," and the ultimate end is to remove all our diseases.[61] Christian education in this perspective will be a direct and authoritative instillation of religion.

Wesley agreed whole-heartedly with Law that education here has the role to remove spiritual diseases born with human nature. He elaborated seven natural diseases that parents and teachers are to correct. The seven diseases are: atheism, self-will, pride, love of the world, anger, dishonesty, and being unjust and unmerciful.[62] An interesting observation is that the spiritual diseases are parallel to sins, but Wesley used plainer language. The cures for these are given in direct instructions: 1) frequent conversation concerning God; 2) breaking the will with firmness and resolution; 3) discouraging praise of children and teaching them that "in pride they are like the devil"; 4) teaching plainness and modesty in diet, dress, and possessions; 5) using scripture to teach them to refuse revenge; 6) teaching veracity, sincerity, simplicity, and openness of spirit and behavior, and that "the

[59] Ibid., 3:348.

[60] Ibid., 3: 349.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 350-60.

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author of all falsehood is the devil"; 7) modeling justice and mercy.[63] In this sermon, Wesley viewed Christian education as a direct transmission of religion -- strict spiritual disciplines but with a lack of mutual accountability of spiritual nurture as demonstrated in the class meeting structure.

From the above direct instructions, one can see that Wesley believed in very strict formal education, based on the assumption that enforcing the radical submission of the child's will and using rational instruction would form Christian character and virtues. There are many controversial themes in this method that may not be applicable to today's parents, such as telling children that they are like the devil in their worst behaviors, or withholding praise and affirmation.

Combining all the four texts regarding the education of children and family religion, we see that Wesley advocated strict disciplines in formal education and intentional training in holiness. In this educational writing, he centered less on the grace of God in people's lives. Wesley's conviction about breaking the child's will has been critiqued positively and negatively. On the positive side, Joseph Seaborn argues that this method is not meant to destroy the child's initiative and personality, since it did not destroy Susanna's children.[64] On the negative side, Robert Moore, Philip Greven, and Henry Rack believe that Susanna's strong influence on Wesley was the probable cause of his difficulty forming serious relationships with women in adult life.[65] Greven demonstrates

[63] Ibid.

[64] Seaborn, 34-35; Prince 116. Both emphasize that Susanna's terms of 'conquer' and 'submit' are more appropriate expressions than John Wesley's use of the term break.

[65] Robert Moore, John Wesley and Authority: A Psychological Perspective, American Academy of Religion Dissertation Series, no. 29 (Missula, Mont. : Scholars Press, 1979), 43-45,

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that this "submission model," whereby the self is suppressed in order to love and fear God, was pervasive in many English and European circles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[66]

This strict Wesleyan discipline of children is welcomed and compatible in the view of many Chinese parents, who believe in maintaining authoritarian discipline over their children. However, this understanding of Wesley's view of education is only one-sided and needs God's Spirit to grace us with wisdom.

In short, Christian education for Wesley could be described as a less than holistic process in regard to children's education, with more emphasis on strict spiritual discipline, leaving less room for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God. Though Wesley believed from his own religious upbringing that children are able to experience the grace of God and God's providence, his emphasis on strict discipline, reflects his limited ability to transcend his own social religious upbringing.

Wesley did not demonstrate how to recognize the seeds of spiritual awakenings whereby children can learn sensitivity to the inner voice of God. However, Wesley's goal was for a holistic process of Christian education and for holiness in the whole family. This vision was indeed sustaining revival and some

95; Greven, 21-148; Rack, 56. All three of these scholars view Susanna's Puritan stereotype of obsession with original sin in children and her desire to break their wills as having a negative influence on Wesley. They all report that Wesley often quotes his mother directly. Greven, specifically, uses Susanna and Wesley as classic examples of what he calls "authoritarian families." Rack and Greven see Wesley's use of his mother's model as more 'evangelical' and less 'moderate' to prepare children for conversion.

[66] Greven, ibid.

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of the practices described in this section are still relevant and valuable.

Conclusions

In conclusion, Wesley's Spirit-led model for spiritual revival and Christian education moved Wesley and the Church of England of his time to make several shifts that will provide inspiration for contemporary religious educators. One significant shift is from a dry-formalism of religion to a felt religion where believers not only experience the Holy Spirit's work in their conversion, but also in their life-long holiness. The worship settings moved beyond church buildings to open fields, market squares, grave yards, homes, and work-areas, like the coal-mines. The prayers included spontaneous prayers and short praises and responses. Many hymns focused on the spiritual journey. The experience of God was not just an inward experience of the Holy Spirit, but also the conviction of our sins and grace-mediated change in people's lives. A second shift is advocacy for family religion. Children and whole families are to be nurtured in holy living, beginning from the time parents have the witness of the Holy Spirit. A third shift is the focus on the instituted means of grace and prudential means of grace, whereby one receives grace and life. Christian religious experience is shaped by prayer, Scripture, the Lord's Supper, bands and classes, visitation, and hymn singing. A fourth shift is Wesley's pioneering in empowering lay leadership. This shift diverges from the clerical orientation of the established church. From Wesley's very structured practices to nurture laity for holy living, contexts were provided in prayer meetings, bands, and class-meetings for people to grow in their

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capacity for leadership as well as in grace. Men and women were given opportunities to care and to lead, not based on gender or class but based on their love for God and the witness of the Spirit.

In Wesley's approach to spiritual revival and Christian education, one can see both strengths and limitations. His strength was in preserving unity and ties within the Church of England, avoiding division and encouraging transformation. He also demonstrated that spiritual nurture takes time, especially for growth in discernment of God's Spirit and the experience of a lasting change of holiness. It seems that as he reflected in his later period of life, he regretted not encouraging more enthusiasm and thus more freedom and the full trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which might have led the Methodist movement even further ahead.

His contribution to family religion was informed by his own social-religious upbringing and God's providence, but limited by the same environments that shaped him. In the end, the heritage of strict spiritual disciplines was preserved; but his openness to children's awakening to God's Spirit was not expanded. His contribution to lay empowerment was limited by his allegiance to the Church of England, which continued to maintain a very hierarchical leadership structure. He was also a man of his times in relation to women. Women were given great freedom of leadership within the bands and classes, but not in the larger society meetings.

The task for scholars and contemporary church leadership is to draw theory and practices for today's churches from Wesley's Spirit-led model and to consider what environments and practices can best shape spiritual awakening

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today. Wesley's model can be a significant guide. In the next chapter, I will examine the Chinese revivalist John Sung's model for spiritual revival and Christian education. Sung was influenced by the Methodist and Wesleyan Holiness traditions; his model also suggests seeds for awakening people in the Spirit and implications for curriculum and pedagogy.

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CHAPTER 7

John Sung's Model for Spiritual Revival and Christian Education

When I first started my research on seeds for Christian religious education in John Sung, I was enlightened and corrected by many Chinese pastors and seminary professors. They told me that I could find in him seeds for revival and evangelism, but not for Christian education. They even advised me to change my title to seeds for evangelism. These answers reflect three misunderstandings about Christian education and John Sung. One misunderstanding is that Sung's contribution is for evangelism as geared to adults, and not for Christian education which is supposedly only for children and limited to the classroom setting. The second misunderstanding arises from the fact that Sung never developed a Christian education theory based on a philosophical and cognitive religious framework. The third is the neglect of the revival's impact on Christian formation.

Those who questioned Sung's importance to Christian education were right but also wrong. They were right when they insisted Sung did not develop a theoretical basis of Christian education and when they said Sung's work in evangelism did contribute greatly to Christian revivals. However, they were wrong in restricting Christian education to children and Sunday School; they were wrong in narrowly defining Christian education as formal, philosophical and doctrinal instruction in the Bible and Christian traditions. They were wrong to neglect the reality that the religious experience modeled by Sung shaped Chinese spirituality, and they were definitely short sighted in limiting the important ways

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that evangelism provides Christian nurture and in restricting Sung's contribution to evangelism only.

The purpose of this chapter is thus aimed at understanding the fullness of Sung's contribution to spiritual revival, the potential for Christian education in his Spirit-filled model, and the limitation of viewing the revival as the norm for Christian education. In this chapter, based on Sung's understanding that spiritual revival and spiritual awakening lead one to continued holy living, I will examine Sung's explicit interpretation of four spiritual practices that nurture spiritual life and holiness. I will also evaluate his implicit teachings regarding spiritual nurture and Christian education.

Sung's Model for Spiritual Revival

Chapter Five, focused on John Sung's understanding of the Holy Spirit, shows how his life models to Chinese churches that awakenings to the Spirit are possible and the experience of the apostolic faith can be restored. The key thread is not just repentance, but a life dedicated to holiness and love for God and souls.

Sung's model for spiritual revival is best understood through his own implementation of four spiritual practices in revival meetings. These spiritual practices are prayer, Bible study, witness, and chorus praise. Sung affirmed a Spirit-filled model, by which one finds Spirit-guidance, inspiration, blessing, and empowerment to witness for Christ. By this the whole church community can be revived, growing in holiness and perfection in love. These basic rudiments in

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building spiritual foundations have become the essential practices in most Chinese churches.

Sung integrated these spiritual practices from the Wesleyan heritage of his Methodist religious upbringing and his own spiritual revival. The spiritual practices that Sung highlighted paralleled Wesley's spiritual practices, but he also added his own Chinese experience of the Spirit's witness through prayer, Bible Study, witness, and chorus praise. According to Sung, the marks of the Spirit-filled Christian are holy living through confession and witness for Christ, and through openness to God's inspiration. This constitutes what I call the Spirit-filled model of holiness, which aims to revive Christians and the Church to continual holy living.

Prayer Practice

Sung emphasized the significance of prayer throughout his life, which can be divided into three periods of ministry: pre- revival, revival, and tomb period, reflected mostly in *Hidden Manna*.[1]

Before the revivals, in his first three years of ministry, Sung taught that prayer had three purposes. First, prayer is conversation with God.[2] Second, prayer leads to healing and casting out demons.[3] Third, prayer will lead to

[1] John Sung, Hidden Manna, ed., Tian Yin Sung, 6 vols (Hong Kong: Bellman House; and Spiritual Rock Co., 1991-1997). These last of Sung's works were -- amazingly -- only restored in 1987, and had been stored in the basement of a school where they were taken during the cultural revolution in the 1940s. The oldest sister, Genesis, edited her father's sermons written while he was sick, and Levi edited his father's diary. There were all together six volumes and volume six was published only in 1999 after the death of Genesis. These sermons reflected more of Sung's mature holiness.

[2] John Sung, The Sermons of John Sung, I (Taiwan: Glory Press, 1988), 1:252; Diary, 49.

[3] Sung, Diary, ibid.

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receiving the presence of the Holy Spirit.[4] These remarks reflect that Sung understood prayer as a seed for spiritual awakening, but he did not fully grasp the dynamic of prayer in relation to revival until his own revival ministry began. In his Hinghwa revival experience in 1909, he already knew there was a connection between revivals and prayer, but he did not articulate that connection until the Nanchang Revival in 1931.

During the revival period, he discovered several meanings of prayer practices. First, prayer is a means for revival. At the Nanchang revival meeting, Sung made a clear request that he would not come to hold the revival meeting unless the missionaries and the teachers would pray for revivals.[5] He claimed that God had inspired him to preach on sin in relation to salvation, confession, and the Holy Spirit; and that he knew this because of intercessory prayers, especially through William Schubert's fifty days of morning prayers.[6] From that revival experience, Sung discovered the secrets of revival to be prayer, confession, and seeking for the filling of the Holy Spirit. He concluded, "If the church disregards prayer, they will never receive revivals."[7] He later remarked, "If it was not the work of the Holy Spirit, who would dare to confess their sin?"[8] In other words, Sung realized that God blesses churches with revivals when the churches pray, and that revivals are inseparable from the work of the Holy Spirit who leads the

[4] Ibid.

[5] Sung, My Testimony, 116.

[6] Ibid., 116-17; Sung, Diary, 66-71.

[7] Sung, Diary, 72.

[8] Ibid., 105.

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church to confession, repentance, and witness.

Second, for Sung, prayer practice affirms faith and is a means for healing. At Sung's first healing service in the 1931 Peingtu Revival, he had not prayed in faith for the physical healing of the sick. Sung judged that the reasons for his delay in receiving the gift of healing were "his lack of faith, not completely dead to self, and the power of the Holy Spirit."[9] Until the missionary challenged him to lay hands on the sick, and until God's Spirit healed a paralyzed woman (as illustrated in the last chapter), Sung did not fully understand that prayer leads to physical healing.[10] Sung further connected faith with healing when the church prayed for another elderly paralyzed woman who confessed her sins and walked before the congregation. After that she became an active witness for Christ.[11] Sung realized that healing is related to prayer. Prayer is not just a means for affirming faith but leads to physical healing, and is inseparable from the blessing of the power in the Holy Spirit.

Third, Sung further understood that confession of sins in prayer practice leads to healing. Healing is inseparable from the church's faith and confession. This realization led him to be selective about where he would hold healing services. Unless a church practiced, believed, and taught prayers and had a basic experience of confession, he would refuse to hold a healing service. One obvious example was in Ching Tao, where he spent time in teaching confession rather than

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 107.

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holding a healing service, even though the church requested it. He said, "I do not come to heal the sick; but to heal the sins."[12] Sung believed that a praying church leads not just to spiritual healing but also to physical healing. In the Amoy Revival in 1934, when the community brought more than 80 sick people for him to lay hands on in order to test him, he summoned the ladies of the church to fast and pray on the mountain. As a result, many were healed, and he laid hands on more than 2000 people in the two events.[13] Thus, toward the end of his ministry, when he was asked about the work of the church, he stressed that "it has to be the works of prayer; and that there will be China revivals, not through one individual, but the work of the Holy Spirit to unite us in prayers."[14] Here, we see that Sung envisioned prayer as leading both to church revivals and China revivals.

During the revival period, the third significance of prayer practice is that it is a means to uphold new converts, leaders, and the church's faith. It is also a means for pastoral care. Sung modeled for church leaders the care of the flock through prayers. One unique practice of Sung is the way he prayed for new converts. He requested thousands of new converts to put their prayer requests on a card with their names and addresses, and sometimes with their pictures. Tow describes that as Sung's "further counseling." He adds that Sung would bring

[12] Ibid., 106.

[13] Sung, Diary, 175-76. Sung recorded that he had laid hands on another 400 people in the second event. From the previous week the number was 1710, which totals 2110 people.

[14] Ibid., 311-15. This was one of his last letters to William Schubert dated October 9, 1941, where he shares his last wish, and sees that the hope of Chinese church revivals is the unity in prayer.

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those prayer requests before God once a day after the morning sermon.[15] Many years later, Rev. John E. Su, who dedicated himself during a revival in Hong Kong, shared his surprise at how seriously Sung took his prayer commitment. Later, Su went back to China to enroll in seminary and twice provided piano accompaniment to Sung's revival in different parts of China. When Su told Sung what his name was, he immediately told Su that he remembered him from Hong Kong and how he had been praying for him all these years.[16] What a memory and what a love he showed those young people as he modeled for church leadership the care of converts.

Fourth, prayer is a means for Christian continued growth in holiness, obedience, and openness to God's inspiration. In this practice, one learns to be humble before God and humans. Sung modeled his own confessional prayer in public and in private, especially in his tomb period. For example, he asked his pastor friends to receive his confession, especially regarding his loss of temper and intolerance for children during his preaching.[17] His missionary friend William Schubert shared that during the tomb period Sung asked him to forgive his criticism toward missionaries. Sung told him, "God tells me that I have been too critical of missionaries"; he added, "[Y]ou left your homes and families, and your own land, and made great sacrifices to preach the Gospel in China, and yet I criticized. I ask you on behalf of the missionaries, to forgive me."[18] This shows

[15] Tow, Asian Awakening, 44.

[16] Su, 7.

[17] Sung, Diary, 289.

[18] Schubert, 70.

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not only Sung's humility and obedience to God's inspiration, but also his maturity in holiness.

In the tomb period, Sung admitted that he did not explicitly stress the work and power of prayer throughout his ministry. He wrote his friend William Schubert in October 24, 1941, saying, "In the past I saw evangelistic works very important; now I see prayer is more important than anything."[19] His understanding of the significance of prayer in connection with holiness matured in his tomb period. The first significant point in the tomb period is that prayer leads to spiritual awakening and wisdom. Writing about the twelve qualities of Christian leadership in the end-time, he concluded that if preachers have the opportunity to pray alone in remote, quiet places, "they may see what I see, and receive what God intends for them to receive."[20] Here Sung realized that prayer leads to spiritual awakenings; he wished many could join him in being open to God's invitation.

The second significant point is that prayer and Scripture are wings taking one to God's throne, or in Wesley's language, to heaven. In his work *Hidden Manna*, Sung saw "prayers and bible study" as "fellowship with the Spirit," saying "they are the two wings that fly us to God's throne"[21] At that time, Sung used a new term, "fellowship with the Spirit," rather than "Spirit-filled." He elaborated that, in spiritual fellowship, "we see God, -- and are enabled to

[19] Sung, Diary, 315.

[20] Ibid., 317.

[21] Sung, Hidden Manna, 1:15.

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understand the way of the mountain."[22] Spiritual fellowship is made possible through prayer and Bible study; "the way of the mountain" represents spiritual or heavenly ways.

The above observation reveals that Sung understood three important perspectives in spiritual awakening and nurture. First, spiritual awakening is a continuous journey and must be nurtured. Second, spiritual nurture does not stop at evangelism or conversion because spiritual awakenings continue as long as one lives. Third, spiritual nurture is not just about taking people home through Christ, but it is an invitation to see God, to fellowship with the Holy Spirit, and to comprehend heavenly matters. No spiritual nurture means no spiritual awakening. Prayer will ultimately lead to such nurture and spiritual awakening.

The third significant point is that, when Christians learn to pray with the Scriptures, they come to understanding of God's will and they receive blessing from the Holy Spirit. Sung said that, by using the Word of God in prayer, one learns the will of God from Scriptures, allows the Spirit to teach intercessory prayers, and learns to live a life of love.[23] Sung basically described this type of prayer as flowing from God's love and will. Sung stressed prayer according to the Word of God because it is a means for blessings, guidance, and faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit.[24]

The fourth significant point is that prayer in the Spirit leads to the Christian way of love and witness for Christ. Even though Sung spoke of

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., 1: 17.

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"praying in the Spirit," he did not emphasize praying in tongues, nor praying in solitude all the time; rather he emphasized the spiritual gift of love. The issue of Sung's view of speaking in tongues was briefly discussed in Chapter Five. Even though Sung did not emphasize speaking in tongues, as observed in Timothy Tow,[25] he mentioned his praying in tongues once in worship and once in dreams.[26] Another well-known Chinese revivalist, Wong Ming Tao, who argued with Sung, believed that tongue-speaking was the sign of being filled by the Holy Spirit. Sung replied that "the Spiritual gift of witnessing for Christ is more important."[27] The comments not only reflect Sung's experience of the Holy Spirit, namely that he does not dwell in tongue-speaking, but it also illustrates his theory of prayer and witness. When more than fifty Pentecostal members came to his revival meeting in Ching Tao, Sung struggled how to guide them. Later, he received inspiration to use the analogy of living water to show that the way to keep the living water or be filled by the Holy Spirit is to "keep love flowing in and out through our witnessing."[28] He illustrated here that having power to love and to witness for Christ are more important than the experience of tongues. This reveals that, in Sung's teaching, the ultimate end of prayer is to witness to Jesus, and to live a Christian life of love, not self-enjoyment.

[24] Ibid., 1: 1.

[25] Tow, Asian Awakening, 54. Tow was correct that Sung did not emphasize speaking in tongues but was misinformed about Sung's absence of speaking in tongue's experience.

[26] Sung, Diary, 109, 137. The first experience was in February 28, 1931; and the second was in April 20, 1933.

[27] Ibid., 164.

[28] Ibid., 80-81.

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The fifth significance of prayer in this tomb period is that Sung saw prayer as a means to lead people to mature holiness, not only to give birth to Christians or stir spiritual revival, but also to lead Christians to live in community. Sung saw prayer closely related to revivals and community. Sung's prayer life was not just about purity of heart and action. In the earlier revival period time, prayer for him was always about birthing and building the body of Christ. He described prayer as "laboring in pain" for the birth of a church and revivals, as he experienced prayer with his evangelistic band team.[29] Here, Sung saw prayer as a laboring process where Christians pray for the birthing of new lives, the church, and revivals; it was full of pain and discipline, but not without joy.

During Sung's tomb period, Sung elaborated considerably on prayer and community. He wrote, "it is the will of God that we learn to live in community," and he claimed that "personal freedom is a delusional self."[30] He explained, on one hand, "God wants us to focus on personal fellowship with the Spirit." On the other hand, "when we are not on the mountain for prayer, --but in a spiritual warfare, we need to pray with two people. With only one person praying it is hard to enter into the Spirit."[31] He stressed in this later period of life, that even "Jesus took three disciples to the mountain for prayers-- and also stress the importance of the Word of God to keep us from delusions."[32] For Sung, prayer and community, especially in the body of Christ is inseparable. In prayer, one

[29] Ibid., 95.

[30] Sung, Hidden Manna, 1:15.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

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learns to have fellowship with the Spirit; but in prayers, one also learns to build the community.

Finally, Sung taught the church to continue in prayer in order to have power to witness. He believed that "the filling of the Spirit is not a one-time event, but that it can be growing thirty, sixty, and one hundred times."[33] This again demonstrates that his holiness experience is a growing process. In this continuous praying for the church, one grows in these perspectives: "grow in the Spirit, grow to know God, love God, hatred to sins and live out the fullness of Christ."[34] This reflects clearly that prayer is a seed for awakening in the Spirit; and it will lead one to mature holiness, both inward and outward.

Bible Study

Sung had very little formal seminary training (about a semester at Union Theological Seminary). He was shaped primarily by his childhood Sunday school education and later by his own Bible study discipline, which greatly developed during his solitude at Bloomingdale Hospital. He believed that the Holy Spirit inspires and guides people to discover the themes of the biblical texts.

For Sung, the Bible conveys the inspiration and will of God, nurtures one to holiness, builds individual Christians, and is the church's spiritual foundation. In preaching, Sung emphasized and illustrated the different Bible Study methods, both for building up individual Christians and the church.

[33] Ibid., 1: 229.

[34] Ibid.

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The first method he taught the congregation is a basic inductive Bible study that has five simple steps. First, is for the congregation to read the texts aloud. Second, the preacher selects a few verses from the inspired texts as the focus for more detailed study. Third, the preacher raises questions to guide the congregation for self-awareness of the truth. Fourth, the preacher will lead the study. Fifth, conclusions will be drawn from the study.[35] The ultimate goal is to draw inspiration and self-understanding of the basic truth and also to ground the church in familiarity with the Bible.

The second method that Sung modeled was a devotional Bible Study discipline. In his sermon on holiness, he described it as a discipline to "develop habits of discerning and submission to the voice of God and the will of God; and he calls it a holiness of self-cleansing."[36] Every morning, Sung read 11 chapters of the Bible, wrote in his journal 11 reflective thoughts from the reading, and then throughout the day practiced what he learned. He said that this discipline trained him in three steps of "self cleansing: learning to live in the will of God, to preach the will of God, and to practice the Word of God in his ministry and his life."[37] He added that this discipline would "not only enhance the flow of preaching, as streams of living waters, but giving him power in preaching."[38] He believed that the more preachers were sanctified by the Word of God, the more God's glory

[35] Sung, Diary, 35-36.

[36] Sung, Sermons 1:341.

[37] Ibid., 343.

[38] Ibid., 342.

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would be manifested, and the more wonders God would work through them.[39] Here, Sung understood that Bible Study leads one to Spirit-filled holiness.

The third method that Sung modeled was his Bible Institute, wherein he preached topical themes in his revivals as well as book by book. In his Bible Institute, when he preached the whole Bible in a month, he modeled an intensive Bible Study and quick reading of the Bible through themes of salvation, repentance, holiness, and victorious life. As mentioned earlier, this kind of spiritual marathon is rare in Church history and indeed provided the best seeds to help Christians survive China's Communist persecution of Christians and intellectuals during the cultural revolution. Bibles and religious books were burned by red soldiers.[40] Amazingly, when China was reopened to holding church services, the old preachers who remembered their Bible stories were the main pillars. These were the seeds of Sung and other Chinese revivalists who sustained and fostered growth in Christianity.

Sung used an expository Bible-study style, preaching verse by verse, as well as using themes of salvation, repentance, holiness, and victorious life.[41] He transformed his pulpit into a big Bible study rally. His method featured the use of thematic hermeneutics, in which a given text is interpreted by the theme of other texts of the Bible. One example is the use of 1 Corinthian 13, the love chapter, to

[39] Ibid., 342-43.

[40] Most of Sung's diaries escaped this fate due to Sung's tiny handwriting and God's protection. Amazingly, by writing such extraordinarily small characters Sung seems to indicate that he knew this might happen. Most of the pictures and thousands of prayer blanks are gone.

[41] Sung, The Sermon Series: Old and New Testament, 3rd ed. (1937; reprint, Amoy: Hall of Grace, 1959). I identified that these themes were evident thoughout this series.

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demonstrate the love of Christ in the study of Mark.[42] Another obvious example is that he read the whole book of Isaiah in parallel with different books of the old and New Testaments.[43] From this hermeneutic, Sung used as many texts as possible to see Christ in the Old and New Testament. To an extreme, he would split up the names of places and people of the Bible to spiritualize them and give new meanings. Ling, his biographer, criticized Sung on this point, saying that, if Sung lived longer, China may have cited him for heresy.[44] This Bible study method reflects Sung's imagination and openness to seek connections and dialogue with the Bible.

The fourth method of Sung's Bible study is story-telling method. Macrus Cheng described Sung's "use of symbols, live objects, illustrations, metaphors, and witness stories to tell the Bible stories" as "serious but powerful."[45] With his sincere, dramatic body movement, big voice, extensive illustrations, role playing of the Bible stories, the passion of his message reached across all ages, stirring up fire in the audience, giving birth to hundreds and thousands of disciples, inspired to become band members and preachers.

In this story method, Sung successfully illustrated sins, repentance, salvation, and holiness thorough objects and metaphors, and he connected basic Christian doctrines to human experience. Tow observed that "Dr. Sung excelled

[42] Ibid., 464-74.

[43] Ibid., 266-84.

[44] Liu, Life of John Sung, 259-60.

[45] Sung, Diary, 152.

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in allegorical and biographical sermons."[46] He elaborated that "often times he would act out his sermon on the pulpit platform and on other occasions he would draw cartoons on the blackboard."[47] Tow showed further that Sung would bring objects, such as a French loaf of bread, a miniature Chinese coffin, a little bell, or a charcoal stove for his illustration of sinners under conviction and salvation.[48] Combining his religious experiences in Sunday school story telling and in his father's preaching three times on Sunday, Sung claimed that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, he had become a professional storyteller. In addition, he modeled how Bible study could be colorful and dynamic when sprinkled with objects, metaphors, and witness stories. Sung once complimented a colleague and showed him "that effective preaching consists of a combination of witness and experience."[49] These witness stories would then speak to the hearts of people.

In this method, Sung powerfully employed metaphors for connecting Bible stories to human stories. As one example, Sung shared his life journey using biblical metaphors of exodus, wilderness, and entering Canaan to preach salvation, repentance, sanctification, and a life of holiness. Another great example is his "Open the Coffin" sermon, whereby he illustrated the need to confess as the means to be saved and to have life again. This grasped the hearts and attention of his audience. Using this method, he confessed his own sins of temper and desiring the world; he also pointed out the social sins of missionaries

[46] Tow, Asian Awakening, 42.

[47] Ibid., 42.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Sung, Diary, 125.

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and imperialism, the institutional sins against Chinese pastors, the seminary sins of teaching liberalism instead of the Gospel, and a whole list of sins from A-Z. Through this story method, Sung invited the congregation to listen to Bible stories, identifying the themes and inspiration, and connecting them to their daily stories through illustrations.

In this story method, the most dynamic approach was Sung's invitation to all the newly converted to share their witness stories on the last day of every revival. Later Sung recycled their stories, published them, and told them to other congregations.[50] The chain of good stories was empowered with the life shared by the witnesses. The dynamic force of this story-telling by the witnesses is incredible. It gave voice to different kinds of people, including those with power (the missionaries) and the voiceless ones (like the beggar mentioned earlier). Story-telling also transforms Bible stories into the people's own stories. People share with confidence what God has done to them through confession, prayer, and the Bible. Later, when Sung shared 129 written witness stories with another congregation right after Nanchang, Sung not only empowered others in this sharing of their own written testimony; he spread their passions and fire of revivals to other Chinese churches.[51]

Sung certainly mastered this great key of story method as a main discipline for spiritual awakening and revivals. In listening to Bible stories

[50]John Sung, Servant's Fables, 2nd ed. (Hong Kong: Bellman House, 1988); and Sung's Fables (Hong Kong: Bellman House, 1991). These two books are basically the witness stories, some with real names, but most of them Sung gave spiritual names in order to highlight their changes.

[51] Sung, Diary, 72.

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through various methods, he helped them to identify their needs and sins as well as the Bible themes. Through sharing the witness stories, he modeled not only a dynamic Bible study practice but also the Spirit-filled holiness to revive people's hearts and lives. Sung encouraged the Chinese church to continue witnessing for Christ, as he said, "it takes every Chinese Christian telling witness stories and building up house meetings, in order for all of China to have great revivals."[52] This insight later influenced the house meetings and house church movement in China that continues today. Sung envisioned how church revivals need more practice of sharing the Bible and witness stories.

Witness

Sung emphasized witness practices for spiritual revival. First, for Sung, witness practice is inseparable from the witness of the Holy Spirit. Witness is an important spiritual practice that confirms converts in their faith, and expands their inward and outward holiness.[53] For Sung, one who is filled by the Holy Spirit will automatically witness for Christ. He or she has a story to tell about Jesus or about the witness of the Holy Spirit. The more Christians witness for Christ and the more they experience the power of the Holy Spirit, the more they want to learn how to share the witness and love of God and the more they will be filled by the Holy Spirit. It is a seal that one has the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Second, Sung understood witness as the means for continuing to be filled by the Holy Spirit. Sung said that the goal of being filled by the Holy Spirit is not

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 94.

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self enjoyment, like speaking in tongues; it is "to let the life in the Spirit flow through the believers." Obeying God's will and witnessing in love are the "right means for searching and maintaining Spirit-filled holiness."[54]

Third, Sung believed that witnessing helps new-born Christians to build and encourage each other; the ultimate goal is to build up the body of Christ to witness for Christ.[55] For Sung, witness practice is where Christians display outward holiness.

Sung developed three levels of witness for all his new converts, building their connections with local churches. The first level is to invite the newly converted to write down their conversion experience or witness story; then they witness before the congregation on the last day of revival meetings. Sung recorded that, at one church on the last day, they started at five in the morning.[56] By allowing lay people to share their witness, they were empowered to share how their lives had been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. This also models for Chinese Christians that religious faith is not a private matter, but a matter of public holiness that involves a change in love for God. By sharing before the congregation, all these new converts were provided a space to build up faith through witnessing. In addition, the church community serves as a continuous support for new converts.

The second level of witnessing is the evangelistic bands formed on the last

[54] Ibid., 80-81.

[55] Ibid., 302.

[56] Ibid., 95.

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day of the revivals. New converts were put into groups of three-to-five to dedicate themselves to witness for Christ weekly and to keep up their faith with regular Bible study. The graduation of these revivals was the sending off of these band members to witness for Christ. Sung later re-stated in his tomb period that the purposes of the Evangelistic Bands were: to witness for Christ, to build up and encourage one another.[57] This was by far the most powerful method for lay ministry empowerment. It not only empowered the lay people to witness for Christ; but provided them a space to be nurtured in a community setting. Sung claimed that Spirit-filled Holiness had empowered the new converts. People of all ages could tell stories and give witness; old and young, literate and illiterate would go out to the streets to witness and pray. He claimed that this method of "inviting the converts to share witness is a link that can not be missed as a means for church revivals; and in that it evokes passions for God."[58] He reflected that "Christian's witnesses are a living Bible" because, in sharing witness, Christians were affirmed by the active works of God as experienced in the Bible.[59] In this witness, not only one's Christian faith is affirmed but also many Christians change their way of living. Sung further remarked that this structure "corrects lay people's attitudes of just enjoying listening to preaching, to enjoying witnessing for Christ."[60] The results multiplied the effects of the new converts.

[57] Ibid., 302. He used Thessalonians 5.11 as the basic text.

[58] Ibid., 53-4.

[59] Ibid., 55.

[60] Ibid., 162.

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The third level of witnessing was the itinerant seminary where three or five were committed to do street evangelism and village evangelism. Sung underwent this method of training when he was a teenager and again when he was an adult.[61] Many of his disciples became revivalists after this practice, confirmed by the fruits of the Holy Spirit. This method is still very common in China; after the laity receive one to three months of intensive Bible training and basic witnessing and evangelism skill, they freely and voluntarily go to remote villages in China to preach the gospel.

In short, the witness practice expands the experience of holiness from mere inward holiness to outward witnessing.

Chorus Praise

For John Sung, chorus praise was the heartbeat of spiritual awakening in Sung's revival, and is a means to introduce the Bible, and Christian faith experience. Most of the choruses were Scripture choruses adapted by Sung to Western and Chinese tunes to which Sung wrote new lyrics.[62] Sung called his Scripture chorus "Bible Study Praise," and he claimed that its purpose was "to motivate people to read the Bible, to understand the gospel (to respond and to witness), to invite God's spirit to transform spiritual power in Christian life, and to renew spiritual life."[63] By singing this chorus praise, Sung introduced the Bible and Christian faith, and he revived the old western and Chinese tunes.

[61] Ibid., 39-47.

[62] Ibid.,112, 199, 202, 212, 215, 299.

[63] Ibid., 35.

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Moreover, Sung also introduced the work of many indigenous Chinese musicians to Chinese churches.[64] In his diary, Sung named this as a method of church revival that he preached in his revivals.[65] Chorus praise is a means for spiritual revival and spiritual awakening that can not be neglected.

Sung used the chorus praise method as a key feature in his revivals to invite a desire for the filling of the Holy Spirit and a deeper relationship with God. He chose short choruses that have very catchy tunes, some Western, some Chinese. One example is "Lord, give me peace, different from the world, no others can take it away, it is a heavenly peace."[66] Sometimes he would change the lyrics to fit in with his preaching theme.[67] Sung lifted up the Spirit of praise in the congregations to open people to the message of Christ. At most of the revival meetings, Sung "invited the believers to praise for the falling of the Holy Spirit, to lead them in prayers and conversion."[68]

Sung was the one and only song leader in his revival meetings since the highly inspirational singing depended on where the Holy Spirit guided him. The major difficulty in this, as raised by John E. Su, was that generally no music was provided, and the accompanist had to adapt to Sung's pitch.[69] Still, his chorus praises grasped the hearts of many Chinese. According to Tow's witness, Sung

[64] Su, 10-11. Su was glad that Sung had basically popularized his song in the Chinese churches by singing it in revivals.

[65] Sung, Diary, 84.

[66] Ibid., 58.

[67] Ibid., 214, 286, 296, 318-20.

[68] Ibid., 43.

[69] Su, 4-5.

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conducted the singing by waving his white handkerchief and singing very loudly; and all would follow.[70] These favorite choruses still live in Chinese church souls today, especially the older congregations. The congregations whom I served still like the old favorites like *Come into My Heart* and, especially *In the Cross, Be my glory ever.* Such short choruses, catchy tunes, and simple repetitive messages are deeply ingrained in many Chinese Christians.

This method may reflect not only Sung, but also the influence of the Bethel Evangelistic Band's revival method. In that Band, Sung was not always the main song leader and soloist since many of these Bethel bandleaders seemed to have musical backgrounds. Andrew Gih, the leader of this band, commented that it was basically the work of the Holy Spirit that led people to weep in singing, to confess sins, and to draw pedestrians as if they "were seized by the Holy Spirit, unable to move; but knelt to repent." Gih added that, "if the church's songs today were used by the Holy Spirit, the results would be even more astounding."[71] This first-hand description of chorus praise affirms that it is a means for revival and spiritual awakening.

In all of the above spiritual practices, Sung advocated the model of Spirit-filled holiness. He explicitly introduced these spiritual practices as a means for revivals and spiritual awakening, leading Christians to live lives of both inward

[70] Tow, Asian Awakening, 31-32.

[71] Andrew Gih, "Instruments Used," in Into God's Family: The Life Stories and Message of China's Famous Bethel Evangelistic Bands (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1933), 92-93.

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and outward Spirit-filled Holiness.

Purpose of Christian Education

Sung did not develop a theory of Christian education; however, he did provide a structured framework of spiritual practices that nurture Christian experience and holy living. This is Christian education. The experience of God and the grace of being filled by the Holy Spirit are at the center of Christian education. From the above spiritual practices, Sung implicitly defined the purpose of Christian education: to nurture spiritual faith and to aim at inward and outward holiness.

In summary, his approaches were: 1) an itinerant traveling seminary where he led three-to-five students in village evangelism; 2) family worship and leading children to devotions and Bible study; 3) dramatic preaching using elaborate body movement, a loud voice, and numerous illustrations and objects to demonstrate and act out the theme he was preaching; 4) personal stories, symbols and metaphors in relating to people; 5) leading Bible study by asking people to pre-read certain books and using questions to lead them to understand a simple truth; 6) receiving life testimonies from the crowd, especially seen in the later part of his ministry; and 7) praying feverishly, demanding that the people pray for themselves and for Sung. These approaches began with village evangelism, Sunday School story telling, Bible studies, and fervent prayers.[72] They became Sung's framework of spiritual nurture, or Christian education.

[72] Sung, Diary, 27-60.

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In this section, I will further examine leadership styles that Sung modeled for the church's imitation. His entire approach was based on a revival norm for Christian nurture. I will evaluate this implicit revival norm, focusing on three questions and also on the critics of Sung. What is the strength of revival norm for leadership? Is the revival norm a sufficient norm for Chinese Christian nurture? What were the negative influences that shaped the Chinese disinterest in Christian education? In answering these questions, I will try to identify Sung's contribution to Christian education as well, hoping to counter the neglect of his contribution heretofore.

The strength of the Sung revival not only stirred up passions for Christ and revived Chinese churches as illustrated before; it also opened space and structures for both men's and women's leadership. Even though Sung did not directly teach a new role of women leadership, the revivals provided space and opportunities for women to share their faith before the congregations, in street evangelism, and in leading Band prayer meetings. In Sung's revivals, many women lay preachers or Bible women were recruited; their visions stretched beyond households and even beyond China. Leona Wu and many others were converts from the revivals in China, who later traveled to Southeast Asia as lay preachers and missionaries.

I observe that Sung's selection of translators was based not on gender but on whether the person was Spirit-filled and had skills in translations. Tow affirms my observation, saying, "Miss Leona Wu interpreted so well that she became Sung's assistant in his extended campaigns to Malaysia and Indonesia."[73] Miss

[73] Tow, Asian Awakening, 45.

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Wu was not just a woman with language skills but was a very dedicated Bible woman. Tow further indicates that Wu, a graduate of Ginling Women's Theological Seminary in Nanking, China, started a Bible School in Singapore for John Sung's converts who desired deeper Bible training. She named it after her former seminary with a different spelling, Chin Lien (the Golden Ling) Bible Seminary.[74] Miss Wu was perhaps the first Chinese woman to found a Bible Seminary. There were many other Bible women inspired by Sung's leadership and passion for God. Unfortunately, though Sung provided vision and opportunities for women to respond to the calling, he did not reform the structure of leadership to offer full partnership between men and women in ministry.

Can the revival norm be a sufficient norm for Chinese Christian nurture and what were the negative influences that shaped the Chinese disinterest in Christian education? Sung's critic, Leung kai-Lun, a contemporary Chinese historian from Hong Kong, extensively demonstrates, from a long-term perspective, the limitations of the revival norm by showing their negative influences on Chinese Christian nurture. In Leung's critique of Sung's contributions to the shaping of the Chinese church, particularly the Chinese church in the Diaspora, he lists three negative influences modeled by Sung.

The first is that church image, influenced by the China Christian revival movement, is supra-denominational or evangelical ecumenistic. Chinese church members and leaders have no consciousness of, or little favoritism for,

[74] Ibid. This seminary in Singapore is more than sixty years old now with several hundred graduates.

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denominations.[75] Leung explains that, due to revivalism's influence in China and the encounters with missionaries from diverse traditions, the Chinese are inspired most by missionaries who came to China on faith without denominational support (with supra-denominational emphasis).[76] Leung says, "even though there are different schools of thought in Chinese churches, ... they seldom stress denominations."[77] He explains further that Chinese believers were more attracted to supra-denomination sponsored revival meetings and were more influenced by the revivalists than by the local pastors. Generally, according to Leung, these revivalists proclaimed one main revival message: restore primitive Christianity. He explains that these revivalists saw themselves as prophets attacking the institutional sins of denominations, as well as the sins of liberalism and the social gospel. As a result, pastors have hesitated to stress the significant tradition of their denominations.[78] Leung concludes that Chinese Churches have been inclined toward a focus on spiritual foundations and principles of Christian faith. He suggests that the main reason why Chinese churches have inclined toward fundamentalism is because they made revival evangelism the norm.[79] From Leung's remarks on this negative influence, the ultimate implication is that the revival norm damages the Chinese church's openness for solid and disciplined Christian nurture.

[75] Leung, "Revivalists' Influence," 147.

[76] Ibid., 147-48.

[77] Ibid., 148.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

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The second negative influence of revivalists on the Chinese church, according to Leung, is that revival evangelism then became the main mode for Chinese Christian nurture. In this claim, Leung believes that many Chinese pastors and believers, under the influence of revivalists, would "stress only the revival of spiritual life as the main task of the church."[80] He demonstrates three side-effects of this attitude about Christian nurture. First is the disinterest in firmer foundations of different theological approaches to doctrines, worship, ethics, and adaptations to the real world. The belief that the power of revivals would restore faith and solve all problems assumed that any intellectual groundwork for Christian nurture was unnecessary.[81] The second side-effect is the gap between revivals and local church life. M. LeeKung Yu commented that few pastors knew how to do effective follow up after John Sung.[82] Chinese believers prefer the revival feast to regular food in nurturing their faith; in the long run, this creates what Leung calls "serious malnutrition in Chinese spirituality."[83] Third, Sung's friend Wang Ming Tao, raises a serious issue regarding Chinese believers, who participated in confession, raising hands, and follow up counseling but, in the end, never knew what they believed. Tao said, "It seemed that they have endless confessions, they can never resolve their

[80] Ibid., 149.

[81] Ibid., 149.

[82] Yu, 181.

[83] Leung, "Revivalists' Influence," 150.

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questions of salvation, in fact they never understand the message."[84] Leung's analysis reveals that the revival norm of Chinese nurture has been very shallow, that Chinese Christians are malnourished, and, in the end, believers are uncertain of their belief due to a lack of systematic teaching. This leaves the believers with a mere imitation of enthusiasm.

The third negative influence is the revivalist's arrogant attitudes, or what Leung calls "the prophets leading the priest's" leadership.[85] This is the main cause of the low self-image of Chinese pastors. Leung illustrates that, when Sung kicked out translators and pianists for not following him, for ridiculing missionaries and Chinese pastors, and for giving little effort to team ministry, he seriously damaged the teaching authorities of pastors.[86] Though Sung's admirers forgave his temper, Sung implicitly cultivated this kind of prophetic leadership for imitation. Leung says, "Just imagine how would the believers respect their traditions and pastors after such criticisms."[87] From this critique, we see how the revivalists lowered pastors' morale and teaching authority, and discouraged believers' desire to work together in teams.

Leung further shows that Sung and his followers created a hierarchical leadership within the Chinese church. Leung observes that a prophetic revivalist like Sung was seen as much superior to the local church pastor. He explains that

[84] Wang Ming Tao, The Fifty Years (Hong Kong: Bellman's House, 1977), 120-21; Leung, ibid., 151. This is Leung's citation and analysis of Tao's criticism of the revival norm influence on Chinese Christian nurture.

[85] Leung, ibid., 151.

[86] Ibid., 152-53.

[87] Ibid., 151-53.

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M. LeeKung Yu, who admired Sung's prophetic leadership, was depressed because of comments that his own preaching was more like teaching, and he was not as dynamic a revivalist as Sung or Gih.[88] This reveals how Sung became a pattern for young people to imitate and admire, and sometimes a standard by which to judge themselves. Leung argues that, though few people would think of the prophets leading the priests, yet this idea has been seen also in the executive leadership of para-church organizations. Leung points out that this executive leadership -- seeing themselves as selling visions and demanding the cooperation and financial support from Chinese church -- is a long-term side effect of the revivalist tradition.[89] From this analysis, we see the hierarchical leadership; pastors are expected to oversee the life of the church and ministries.

After Leung published the above article on the revival's negative influences, he found more evidence from Macrus Cheng that supports his argument. In Cheng's observations of Chinese churches in the Diaspora of the 1940s, the churches generally held common yet very critical expectations of their pastors. First, Chinese churches expected their pastors to be saints. Second, they treated their pastors like "oxen and horses." Third, they mocked their pastors, in scolding tones, as "robbers."[90] Cheng adds that his forty years of observation reveals that many pastors have resigned due to these treatments from churches

[88] Leung, 154; and Yu, 130-31.

[89] Leung, ibid.

[90] Marcius Cheng, "Pity Pastors," Journal of Evangelism, issue 8 (July-Aug. 1935): 1-2; and Leung, "Addendum to Historical Sources: Macrus Cheng on Revivalist," Jing Dao: A Journal of Bible and Theology, issue 11 (Jan. 1999): 325-28. This analysis of Cheng is a citation from Leung.

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and revivalists.[91] Cheng further points out that, if Chinese churches do not change this attitude towards their pastors, "it is a real miracle that young people will want to go to the seminary."[92] Cheng later commented that the over-dependence on revivals, without self-reliance to provide Christian nurture is abnormal, and it overlooks pastors' contributions to the local church.[93] Cheng suggests, "The local church pastors should birth and nurture their churches; and the outside revivalist should be the last resort;" he has found that local church have benefited from this suggestion.[94]

Leung clarifies that the intention of his research is not to discredit the work of revivals, but simply to challenge local churches to face the issues and to prevent the occurrence of future damage to Chinese churches.[95] To the question of whether revivals can be the sole norm for Christian nurture, the answer clearly is "no." The revival norm has its limitations, neglecting the nurture of a full church life and team leadership. Christian nurture should include the combination of a revival tradition that places the experience of the Holy Spirit in the center of a balanced nurture of holiness. Moreover, Christian education should take implicit practices of leadership into consideration to avoid mere imitation of leadership;

[91] Cheng, "Pity Pastors," ibid., Leung, "Addendum to Historical Sources," ibid.,

[92] Ibid.

[93] Cheng, "Editors Notes: How to Revive Churches," Journal of Evangelism, issue 7-8 (July-Aug. 1946): 4; and Leung, "Addendum," 327.

[94] Cheng, "Editors Notes: How to Revive Churches," Journal of Evangelism, issue 1-2 (Jan.- Feb. 1947): 1-3; and Leung, ibid., 328.

[95] Leung, "Addendum," 328.

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definitely, church leadership should not leave Christian nurture to revivalists only.

Conclusions

In conclusion, in John Sung's life and ministry, I have demonstrated that many seeds for spiritual awakenings were planted. For Sung, the key to revivals was not just repentance but also for the individuals and church to be Spirit-filled. Sung also modeled that the spiritual journey of Christians does not stop at a born-again experience, but needs to continue through a life of holiness. The Chinese churches need to continue to utilize the spiritual practices of prayer, Bible study, witness and chorus praise to nurture spiritual revivals and Christian education. On the other hand, the evaluation of Sung's revival norm for Christian education reveals that this norm is inadequate by itself. The evaluation emphasizes that churches should not abandon their responsibilities to nurture a balanced spirituality. The Church should not leave spiritual nurture to revivalists. Each Church has to birth spiritual awakening and nurture growth in its own ways, involving men and women, pastors and lay members.

Sung's contribution was not restricted to evangelism or revivals, but involved the whole church in spiritual nurture, concerned with inward and outward holiness. If the misunderstanding of Sung's contributions, as limited to revivals, is not corrected, Chinese churches will further damage themselves in three ways. One result will be a lack of church leadership and a consequent loss of congregational nurture. Leaders will continue to be hunting for spiritual food through attending unlimited revival meetings and will neglect the church's

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mission. Another damage is that the church will have unclear expectations and disrespect of pastors in their teaching leadership. Churches will never have a chance to grow in holiness without the pastor teaching and working with laity in team ministry. The third is that there will be a continuous shortage of young Chinese attracted to the pastoral ministry, which will seriously affect expansion and growth. It is time for the Chinese church to build from Sung's heritage a holistic approach of Christian religious educational practices that will not only evoke revivals but also a continuing nurturance of holiness in individuals and the community.

In short, it is in the interest of the Chinese church to consider Christian nurture as a whole that includes evangelism as well as growing in holiness, both for individuals and congregations. In the next chapter, after reviewing Sung and Wesley, I will draw upon their spiritual awakenings and models of holiness to inform a model of Christian religious education for awakening and living in the Spirit.

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PART FIVE

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR AWAKENING AND LIVING IN THE SPIRIT

Part Five is a concluding chapter that draws inspiration for a Spirit-centered education from the comparative study of John Wesley and John Sung. The comparisons are from Wesley's and Sung's understandings of the Holy Spirit, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and from their models of spiritual revival and Christian education in Chapters 6 and 7. I will explore their convergence and divergence in spiritual understandings and in Christian education in order to inform Christian religious education. The educational vision is to prepare people for awakening by the Spirit and continuing growth in holiness and mission. The primary purpose of this chapter is to uncover approaches for nurturing spiritual awakening and life in the Spirit. More specifically, this section explores the curriculum and pedagogy needed for such nurture. For that purpose, this chapter includes uncovering seeds for awakening and living in the Spirit, with practical proposals for education.

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CHAPTER 8

Christian Religious Education for Awakening and Living in the Spirit

Three strong beliefs have undergirded this dissertation. The first belief is that the Spirit planted many seeds for spiritual awakening. Reflecting on these religious experiences can be significant for shaping the theory and practice of Christian religious education. The second belief is that John Wesley and John Sung can inspire and guide Spirit-centered education. Their understandings of religious experiences inform Christian religious education. The third belief is that we need a holistic process for redesigning Christian religious education. These need to be informed by historical and cultural contexts and aimed at preparing people for an awakening by the Holy Spirit. With such convictions, I move now to a comparison of Wesley's and Sung's understandings of religious experience and their contributions toward an integrated theory for teaching and living a dynamic Christian life.

In exploring the heritage of John Sung and John Wesley, common features qualify them for reforming Christian practice. First, both had many experiences of spiritual awakening and living. Drawing from their lives, the one-time conversion model will not fit, for Christian religious education toward holiness is a life-long journey. Second, both men recognized that sin blocks spiritual awakening, and that repentance is needed for restoring holiness. This is part of the life-long process toward Christlike holiness. Third, both attributed spiritual awakening to the grace of God. In that recognition, both believed that God alone

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plants seeds for spiritual awakening; however, spiritual awakening can be nurtured through communal witness and disciplined living. Fourth, both perceived that the seeds for awakening people in the Spirit include spiritual practices of prayer (including confession), Scripture, witness, singing, and spiritual journal writing. Finally, both maintained that the chief end of spiritual awakening is to attain holiness of heart and life.

Given this convergence of John Sung's and John Wesley's spiritual awakenings, both shared a holiness model of Christian religious education. The primary purpose of this chapter is to uncover approaches for nurturing spiritual awakening and living. More specifically, it asks what curriculum and pedagogy are needed for such nurture. The convergence of Wesley and Sung will provide inspiration for this Spirit-centered education; their divergence will raise important questions for developing educational approaches that speak to the Chinese experience. For that purpose, this chapter includes: 1) uncovering seeds for awakening and living in the Spirit; 2) proposals for educational practices; 3) conclusions.

Spiritual Awakening and Living

In this section, I would like to develop some basic steps for awakening people in the Spirit. This section covers four areas. First, it offers definitions of spiritual awakening. Second, it compares the understandings of Wesley and Sung regarding spiritual awakening and living in the Spirit, making connections with Chinese religious experience. Third, it introduces the significance of spiritual

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awakening in Chinese Christian education. Fourth, it develops story-telling and story-listening as spiritual paths to spiritual aliveness. In the conclusion, I will suggest several changes in the church's educational ministry if it is to center on spiritual awakening and living. Based on these discussions, further proposals can be made in the next section regarding experiences and practices that must be integrated into curriculum and pedagogy for Christian religious education in both East and West.

Definitions

Before we compare Sung and Wesley, we must define spiritual awakening in contemporary educational literature; then we will proceed to compare spiritual awakening from the perspectives of Sung and Wesley. Since Sung was a Chinese evangelist and Wesley an English priest, and both were shaped by the spirituality of the Hebrew Bible, a general comparison of the definitions of the spiritual awakening according to the Hebrew Bible will be helpful.

Maria Harris acknowledges that Western spirituality shaped by the Hebrew Bible offers not only "awakening in the inner life, but also a call to awaken to other silences, the community and a loving and attentive Mystery, always ready to receive us human beings," according to our own timing.[1] In this definition, we see that spiritual awakening is a broad term about animating people in their inner lives, and awakening them to silences, community, and to God. Harris explains that these spiritual awakenings can be triggered by tragic crises,

[1] Harris, Dance of the Spirit, 5.

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unexpected conversations or even natural transitions, like the first day of school or the first day of a woman's period, whereby one's increased vulnerability pushes toward a deepened awareness of God.[2] Built on this explanation, we see that all human experiences and environments have the capacity for spiritual awakenings. They are potential seeds for spiritual awakening that must not be neglected because the seeds can nourish deeper spiritual living.

There have been many descriptions of the broader implications of spiritual awakenings. Maria Harris points out several insights for understanding our awakening shaped by the Hebrew Bible. She lifts up three features of spiritual awakening: 1) spiritual awakening is not from one's inner silence only, but also from the silences of the defenseless; 2) spiritual awakening is never totally private, never meant for individuals but is "situated in communities with others, especially communities of care"; 3) spiritual awakening is awakening to the ever loving presence of God and Mystery.[3] From these insights, we see that spiritual awakenings relate to our inner silence, to outside silence in the community and to our need for connection with God. Spiritual awakening does not imply a simple connotation of evangelization and God's mission. Spiritual awakening implies a broader sense of awareness. It awakens one to listen to the missing voices, to ourselves, and to God, as well as to the outside silence in the community. Christian religious education cannot neglect the need to connect to the silence within our hearts, to the silence of the defenseless in the community, and to God.

[2] Ibid., 13-15.

[3] Ibid., 5.

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When we miss seeing and hearing other silences in the community, we do not see God's face or respond to God's call in the world, and our spiritual awakenings will run the danger of becoming private separatist.

James Loder notes that transforming moments have four dimensions: the lived world, the self, the Void, and the Holy.[4] He describes the consequences of transforming moments: one finds that the world is "recomposed," and one identifies the coherence and incoherence in solving the puzzles.[5] Loder further describes the awakening to self, as elaborated by Søren Kierkegaard's thoughts, whereby one begins to reflect, relate, and perceive oneself as a spirit being.[6] The awakening to void as described by Loder is awareness to nothingness, "the implicit aim of conflict, absence, loneliness, and death."[7] The fourth awakening is awakening to the Holy. Loder explains that this awakening is not just the experience of "the Divine Companion or the Presence of the Holy," which remains Other; but one experiences how "serenity comes up out of anxiety, joy out of depression, hope out of hopelessness; when good is returned for evil, forgiveness replaces retaliation, and courage triumphs over fear, then we recognize the movement of something beyond personality and mental health."[8]

[4] Loder, Transforming Moment, 64-91.

[5] Ibid., 72-73.

[6] Ibid., 73-79; and also Soren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling and the Sickness unto Death , trans. Walter Lowrie (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1954), Sickness, pt. 1.

[7] Ibid., 79.

[8] Ibid., 88.

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These four dimensions are transforming moments for spiritual awakening where one awakening to the lived world, to self, to the Void, and to the Holy.

Because spiritual awakening may occur many times and in may forms through a person's life, the language of "spiritual awakening and living" is used in this chapter to keep the fullness of the process in the forefront. The holistic nature of spirituality and education was important to John Wesley and John Sung; it may be even more important today in light of the present situation and the critiques of Wesley and Sung. To pursue these questions further, we turn to a comparison of these two spiritual leaders from the past.

Comparing Wesley and Sung

In comparing John Wesley and John Sung, I will reflect on their understandings of the Holy Spirit, as explored in Chapters 4 and 5, and also on their models for spiritual revival and Christian education, as explored in Chapters 6 and 7.

Both Wesley and Sung defined spiritual awakening as the experience of God's presence, grace, calling and guidance. When people awaken to God's mighty presence and salvation, they also awaken to their lack of faith and knowledge to comprehend God's Mystery. Both Wesley and Sung went through spiritual upheavals and frustrations. Wesley, for example, awakened to his lack of faith and fruits of faith. Sung's zeal led him to lose strength, openness, and clarity; Union Theological Seminary suspected him of madness and admitted him to a mental hospital. Both men witnessed supernatural experiences and healings, revealing to them that spiritual awakening takes many forms. Further, their

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experiences of spiritual awakening revealed that spiritual guidance is needed and Christian nurture is imperative. Spiritual awakening needs to be nurtured. Wesley sought guidance from the Bible, Moravian friends, reason, prayer, disciplined living and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Sung sought guidance only from the Bible and prayer, and through his desire for witness.

As to means for spiritual awakening, both affirmed the importance of spiritual practices of prayer, Scripture, witness, and singing. Wesley, however, described a wider range of the means of grace: the ordinances of God, the Lord's Supper, and the providential means of grace such as bands and class meetings and visitation. Wesley provided a more solid structure for spiritual nurture and pastoral care, especially through visitation of the poor, sick, afflicted and members of the society. For Sung, prayer for the converts, the leaders, and the sick were the primary forms of pastoral care among Christians or new converts. Sung provided a more narrow structure of spiritual nurture and pastoral care.

Both Wesley and Sung connected faith and love as a means to maintain holiness. However, love for Sung was more focused on loving individual souls and less on a wide range of good works as elaborated by Wesley. For Wesley, holiness is not anti-nominanism; and he stood against quietism, thus correlating justification and sanctification. For Wesley, inward and outward holiness are both important to spiritual life. He, therefore, valued worship, sacraments, Scripture reading, and human responsibilities to love neighbor. Wesley's understandings of spiritual nurture were more inclusive than those of Sung.

For both Wesley and Sung, spiritual awakening aims not only for

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individual salvation and self-enjoyment, but also for building a relationship with Christ and building up the church. For Wesley it would contribute also to building up the community, as through good works, protest against injustice, and philanthropy; for Sung, it would focus more on spiritual revival. Further, Sung was not as organized as Wesley, in terms of providing structure for building up the church.

Although for both Wesley and Sung, spiritual awakening eventually led to inward and outward holiness, their own language and religious experiences of spiritual awakenings were limited. In their public ministries, they evoked human passions for ministry but failed to invite people to holistic living.

One of the best examples of their mutual limitations is in family life. Sung's and Wesley's parents and they themselves shepherded their respective parishes, but did not expect to have a happy Christian family. This issue existed for both Wesley and Sung, even though they were from different contexts and different eras, thus indicating a potential issue for many pastors' families. Sung's father, who was a Methodist pastor, struggled through poverty, even though he was a popular and successful pastor. Sung had family obligations--taking care of his siblings--all of his life. This reflects the hardship of Chinese pastors and the injustices of missionaries toward Chinese pastors in those times. Wesley's parents had many differences while he was growing up. The negative lesson in this is that pastors could teach others about family religion, but they often remain unable to care for their own families. In the case of Sung and Wesley themselves, they were both so much on fire for God that they neglected their families. Sung

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was home for his wife and five children only one or two months a year; only three girls survived. Wesley never resolved his problems of intimate relationships with women.

On a more positive note, the spiritual awakenings of John Wesley and John Sung reflected what Loder called awakening to the needs of the world, thus finding ways to relate to God's mission, to sin, and to the Holy in the world. Loder's understanding implies mental health, however, which was somewhat lacking in both John Wesley and John Sung.

The commonality in the spiritual awakenings of John Wesley and John Sung reveals the contribution of family religious upbringing as well as social environment for spiritual awakening. The lives of John Sung and John Wesley show that family and church experiences can nurture spiritual awakening, but they may also hinder it when a partial or distorted teaching becomes the norm. In the case of Wesley, his strict spiritual disciplines may have been the factor that initially hindered him from a spontaneous and personal experience of the grace of God. For John Sung, his revival training hindered him from a clear experience of conversion. Their lives reveal to us that spiritual awakening should not be assumed, even within strong religious environments.

The purpose of a Spirit-centered education as inspired by John Wesley and John Sung will aim at preparing people for a continuing life of holiness, evoking their passions for mission and holistic living. Both men experienced God's grace and became convinced that the human response to God's love is repentance and holy living. Wesley's model inspires a fuller framework and content for inward

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and outward holiness and for spiritual nurture and pastoral care. First, Wesley integrated a fuller range of the means of grace, including the Lord's Supper, prayer, fasting, Christian conference or conversation and visitation. These means were not included in Sung's spiritual practices. Christians are not to stay solitary in prayers, but are to seek spiritual guidance from all ordinances of God, religious friends, and personal waiting upon the Lord through fasting. Second, Wesley's model provided a more solid structure of band and class meetings, societies, and conferences where Christians could be nurtured in various contexts. Third, Wesley elaborated outward holiness more than Sung. For Wesley, outward holiness meant caring for the community, including the sick, the poor, and the afflicted. Sung mostly rejected home visits, including home prayers for the sick. Sung also reflected more of his poor interpersonal relationships and his tendency to ignore others and allow his temper to explode with people around him. For Sung, outward holiness consisted largely of one's witness for Christ and living a life of love in the community.

In terms of evoking their passions for mission, both Wesley and Sung had a strong ability to draw people into missions. Wesley initiated a Methodist movement, and Sung stirred up fire for Christian missions. Both inspired many other preachers and revivalists. However, Wesley's logical, formal, and strict disciplines for spiritual revival attracted English hearts; and Sung's colorful, impromptu, and creative spiritual practices grasped Chinese hearts. Sung's employment of illustrations, objects, metaphors, witness, and especially the story method of connecting Bible stories to human stories, spoke to the Chinese

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experience and also nurtured their passion for telling God's stories to the people.

Both Wesley and Sung had their limitations in preparing people for spiritual awakening and living. This affected their contributions to Christian religious education. Wesley overemphasized strict discipline to bend the will of children, which would create controversy and conflicts between children and parents today. In relation to children, he focused little on his theology of grace and left little room for the working of the Holy Spirit. Wesley's Spirit-led model seems to stay in tension with the human spirit when control is exercised. For Sung, having the revival as normative for Christian education not only destroyed Christian appetites for solid nurture, it also brought stagnation. Christian living was neglected by expecting renewal without conscious responsibilities for spiritual nurture.

In short, both Wesley and Sung inspired a Spirit-centered education that prepared people for a continuing life of holiness, evoking passions for mission and holistic living, but not without opening questions for further research. The test of Spirit-led or Spirit-filled holiness, however, is not perfection, but the fruits of the Spirit and Christian love in the community and larger society.

Spiritual awakening and Chinese Christian education

Why is it so significant to integrate spiritual awakening into the process of shaping Chinese Christian religious education? I will argue that awakening to the Holy Spirit is at the heart of Chinese Christian experience and Eastern spirituality. Maria Harris explains that Eastern Spirituality is based on contemplation -- on waking up to the world around us, to our own spirituality and to silences in order

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to discover God, ourselves and others, and to discern how we are all interrelated.[9] Eastern spirituality grounds spiritual awakening more in contemplation than does Western spirituality. Within this Eastern heritage, Sung emphasized more fully than did Wesley the dynamic of prayer. Though both Wesley and Sung focused on the significance of prayer, it was Sung who, with his Chinese experience of contemplation, placed greater emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit through visions, dreams and a healing ministry.

In relating spiritual awakening to Chinese experience, Kwok Pui-Lan is also helpful for she makes connections with women studying the Bible. She says, "When women study the Bible, we do not read from a written text. Instead, we share our stories, songs, and dreams. We sing, we dramatize, and we wait for the presence of the Holy Spirit."[10] Kwok observes that stories, songs, dreams, and the expectation of the visit from the Holy Spirit serve as means to spark spiritual awakenings for Chinese Christian women.

C. S. Song, another Taiwanese Presbyterian theologian, affirms the Spirit-movement in Asia. He indicates that identifying the movement of the Spirit in the lives of people is the main task of Christian theology in Asia. It is not only a Chinese interest, but also an Asian interest to identify the spiritual movement in our stories. He says,

> We do not live in Asia as a world 'free from the Spirit.' As far as the Spirit is concerned, Asia has never been a vacuum – a space without the

[9] Harris, Dance of the Spirit, 6-7; This insight was embedded in me when I took the course "Teaching and Religious Imagination" under her in 1987. That turned me on to listening to my inner voice and other silences; later it also helped me to listen to my cultural heritage.

[10] Kwok Pui-lan, Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1995), ix.

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> air (the Spirit) and a reality without the wind (the Spirit).---Doing theology must, then, begin with the invoking the Spirit who is already in us and around us—There is no "Spirit-proof" space in Asia. Nor is there a "Spirit-tight" place in our community not related to Christianity. Christian theology in Asia is, then, not only possible; it is necessary. To identify the movement of the Spirit of God in our work through stories of men, women and children, is the main task of Christian theology.[11]

In the above statement, Song shares Kwok's claim that stories will spark spiritual awakening; and that Asian theology begins with invoking the Holy Spirit. The reason we need to aim at spiritual awakening as the purpose of Christian religious education is because "the Spirit is already in us and around us" in every moment of human living.

Story-Telling and Story-Listening as Spiritual Paths

Drawing from the inspiration of John Wesley and John Sung, the basic method for fostering spiritual awakening is the story-telling and story-listening method. Other methods of nurture will be discussed in the next section. In order for religious educators to determine what seeds God has planted in individuals and in the church through time, I believe that the story-telling and story-listening method should be employed.

From listening to stories of John Wesley and John Sung, I discover four types of stories to which religious educators need to pay attention. First are the everyday life stories, both positive and problematic, as in the wilderness stories of Wesley and Sung. Second are the stories of the Good News of Jesus Christ in Scripture, especially as told by people who have experienced this Good News and

[11] Choan-Seng Song, "Telling Stories of the Spirit's Movement in Asia," in Doing Theology with the Spirit's Movement in Asia, eds. John C. England, Alan J, Torrance, and Yeow Choo Lak (Singapore: ATESEA, 1991), 1-14, esp. 11-12.

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the works of the Holy Spirit. Third are the cultural stories of contemporary experiences, struggles, and witness.[12] Fourth are hidden stories that come to consciousness or ring in the hearts of people in the church.

This fourth type of stories, the hidden stories, is a secret pathway to connect one with God. When neglected, one loses these opportunities to be guided and blessed by the Holy Spirit. Individuals and churches lose their sense of passion for holistic living and mission. When one listens carefully, the story will direct one to spiritual awakenings. In John Wesley, supernatural experiences and personal experiences of the Holy Spirit fascinated him. Sung was grasped by what God said to him in visions, which he shared in vivid illustrations.

Just as Ann Wimberly's story-linking method has four steps, this story-telling and story-listening also has steps. First, listening is the main approach for uncovering the voices coming of God, self and world. The sources, as suggested above, are Biblical stories, personal stories, cultural stories (including folk stories as advocated by C.S. Song), and hidden stories that may not be fully conscious.[13] The second step is to identify what those stories are telling us. This is a process where C.S. Song calls us to let the storytellers tell their own names from Asian

[12] Ann S. Wimberly, Soul Stories: African American Christian Education (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 20-21. The first three types of stories are inspired by Wimberly's story-linking method. However, instead of linking as she is suggesting, I prefer to use listening as the main approach for uncovering God's seeds planted and suggest one more type of stories.

[13] Choan Seng Song, The Believing Heart: An Invitation to Story Theology; Tell Us Our Names: Story Theology from an Asian Perspective (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984); Theology from the Womb of Asia (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1986); The Tears of Lady Meng: A Parable of People's Political Theology (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981). For C. S. Song, cultural stories include folk tales, fairy stories, parables, and stories from unlimited Asian sources. C.S. Song includes a broader perspective of cultural stories than Sung.

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perspectives.[14] In Pui-Lan Kwok's method of suspicion, this involves listening to the stories with important questions in mind: who owns the truth? who interprets the truth? and who constitutes the truth?[15] This step invites the listeners to hear the heritage, to interpret, and to seek hope for liberation and healing. The third step is to link the stories with personal stories, Biblical stories, and a larger story, as suggested by Anne Wimberly.[16] This process helps people to affirm and reform their faith as they find connections in the biblical and other stories. The fourth step is engagement. This involves inviting the Holy Spirit to engage us in ethical decisions, further reflection, and the transformation of hearts and actions. This is a process that invites the Holy Spirit to be our teacher, our guide, and to empower us for transformation, spiritual and physical healing.

To illustrate this method, I give two examples of how I help people to discern the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and lead them toward greater sensitivity to the Spirit or for conversion. One example was a simple fellowship meeting in which we studied the gospel of Mark. I was not leading the group but just happened to be there. One newcomer, also a non-Christian, raised several questions of the gospel and marveled at the love of Christ. The group leader could not answer all his questions. She suggested having dialogue with him after the meeting. I asked a few questions to discern his interest and later invited him to accept Christ as his savior. The group was amazed how easy it was to lead one to Christ. I explained to them later that the method was basically listening,

[14] C.S. Song, Tell Us Our Names.

[15] Pui-lan Kwok, Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World, 9-12.

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identifying his interest in asking God to help him, connecting with his desire to ask God to save him from his troubles, and inviting God to come to his heart. All the stories he told me were signs that God was already working in him. All I needed to do was to encourage him to welcome Christ and the Holy Spirit, who were already working in his life. This story-telling and story-listening method brought him to a spiritual awakening, awakening to God's presence, his desires, his troubles, and God's salvation.

Another example is from a woman who shared with me her extraordinary experience. She was a woman who struggled with her marriage, often involved in quarrels and blows with her husband. I had given her pastoral care and recommended her for professional counseling. One day, when I visited her husband who was just discharged from hospital, she told me that instead of praying for her husband, she kept hearing praise choruses in her mind. I asked her to describe the feeling of that experience and whether she could tell me what it was about. She told me that she felt great and restored passions for her husband; and she felt it was the work of the Holy Spirit. I listened, helped her to identify the feelings, and prayed with her and her husband for healing. Their problems may still exist, but the listening helped her to affirm God's working in her; it also invited her for more sensitivity to the Spirit's guidance.

These two examples briefly illustrate the importance of story-telling and story-listening. This method assumes that each story speaks the hearts and struggles of people and also the heart of God for people. With conscious listening

[16] Wimberly, 38-39.

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to God's working in each story, we will uncover the seeds of spiritual awakening and important spiritual disciplines. Christian religious education needs to take people into this journey of being guided by the Holy Spirit. Only then can it revitalize the lives of individuals and churches; only then will it evoke genuine passions for holistic living and for mission.

Conclusions

The basic convictions of spiritual awakening affirm that God's Spirit invites people for renewal and transformation. Drawing from the inspiration of Wesley and Sung, the church needs to center on spiritual awakening and living in its education ministry. The general direction for this process includes the following:

1. This process invites churches and mission boards to move prayerfully in nurturing spiritual awakenings and service to others. It subverts what modern culture teaches, to be "quick, ambitious, compulsive, productive, and protecting outward image."[17] It employs all possible spiritual practices in committees or board meetings to nurture sensitivity to God's guidance. It aims at listening for and discerning God's call and mission, as well as the community's inner struggles, before planning programs.
2. This process can employ a story method to listen, to connect, to share witness stories, and to expand love for humanity in order to enhance visions of holistic living and missions.

[17] Connie Zweig and Steve Wolf, Romancing the Shadow: A Guide to Soul Work for a Vital Authentic Life (New York: Ballantine, 1997), 5. Nurture for spiritual awakening is very similar to their shadow work. This list of directions is inspired by their works.

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3. This process invites the church to face sins and responsibilities. It takes several forms. First is daily confession. Second is to involve people in covenant groups for mutual confession and caring of souls. Third is to encourage openness for partnerships with people of different races, cultures, genders, and traditions, and to share the gifts of the Holy Spirit together. Finally, the church needs to nurture mature Christians to be spiritual guides and mentors for the church and community.
4. This process invites churches to be equipped for evangelism and for spiritual nurture that awakens people to God's mission and holistic living.
5. The process invites the people of God to be willing to be fools for Christ, and to let God's Spirit guide them so that they are open to take risks for mission and caring.
6. The process invites all Christians and pastors to be involved in missionary works at some time in their lives, like Wesley's involvement in the Georgia Mission and Sung's involvement in village evangelism and the itinerant seminary. Missionary service will sharpen their awareness to God's guidance and the love for God that leads to continuous spiritual awakening and living.
7. The process, finally, invites the people of God to live in response to the Holy Spirit -- to trust God's Spirit for transformation, healing, guidance, and blessings. In short, it invites the church and mission boards to be intentional in nurturing spiritual awakening and sharing the experience of God with

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others.

Proposals for Educational Practices

In our discussion above, the principal aim of Christian religious education is to prepare people for a continuing life of holiness, evoking passion for mission and holistic living. The next step is to design an educational plan to achieve that goal. The primary goal of this study is not to explore particular techniques, but to propose directions for curriculum and pedagogy.

Curriculum

The content of curriculum has gone through major adaptations by contemporary theorists, in order to extend its meaning. From the original Latin verb *currere,* which means to run, curriculum means literally a course to run. Throughout the history of educational institutions, this notion has been specified by such phrases as a course of study, or the content or subject matter to be taught. Maria Harris extends the meaning of curriculum further by thinking of it as an "entire course and life of the Church."[18] Iris Cully sees curriculum as "all learning experiences."[19] John Westerhoff identifies the power of socialization and enculturation as the "hidden curriculum"; and he claims that "the schooling-instructional paradigm no longer addresses the educational needs of both the

[18] Maria Harris, Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1989), 55.

[19] Iris Cully, "Changing Patterns in Protestant Curriculum," in Changing Patterns of Religious Education, ed. Marvin Taylor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 220.

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small and large church."[20] Elliot W. Eisner, classifies curriculum into three forms: null, explicit and implicit curriculum; these basically cover all life experiences and a consideration of what is left out.[21] Eisner spells out null curriculum as the content and methods that we do not teach; while implicit curriculum is the life experience that is not explicitly designed into the curriculum, like attitudes, energy or time spent on the educational design. Taken together, these are similar to Westerhoff's hidden curriculum.

In the context of Christian religious education, Mary-Elizabeth Moore develops an inclusive definition, that curriculum must include both present experiences and accumulated tradition in order for us to imagine the future.[22] In this definition, a curriculum for spiritual awakening will include the accumulated tradition of apostolic faith and the present experience of the witness of the Spirit; it is thus described as the "accumulating tradition."[23] Both Sung and Wesley witnessed to the power of accumulated tradition, particularly Biblical faith that germinated in their lives through their parents, their churches and their own experiences of God. The memorization of biblical texts, stories, prayers, and the experience of church life and spiritual disciplines all contributed to spiritual awakenings. Their lives witnessed to the fact that even spiritual awakenings were

[20] John Westerhoff III, Will Our Children Have Faith? (Minneapolis: Seabury Press, 1976), 16-19.

[21] Elliot W. Eisner, The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1985), 87-107.

[22] Mary Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change, 177.

[23] Ibid., In this definition it invites the ongoing experience of the community to contribute to the tradition.

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not birthed out of blue, but out of a love planted in their souls.

What kind of curriculum will be inspired by John Wesley and John Sung? As we discussed earlier, the purpose of Christian religious education will be aimed at nurturing people for growth in Christlike holiness and evoking their passions for mission. The context of the curriculum will be the church.

Wesley would perhaps utilize a more structured educational system for children, integrating the hard work and discipline of spiritual exercises and an intentional plan to teach logic, reason, tradition and experience of the Holy Spirit. From his own example, he would perhaps require the teachers to write a spiritual journal, and plan for children to learn from nature through work in the garden as he prescribed for Kingswood school.[24] His education would be very systematic and comprehensive, including a wide range of academic disciplines, but the ultimate goal of learning would be spiritual edification. Learning original languages, for example, would be to better understand the Bible. He would encourage children to be open to their own religious experiences and struggles, and he would arrange for spiritual guides.

Sung's educational system was actually practiced in his itinerant seminary, aimed at bringing the church to the field. He would have teachers with children and adults in the daytime; in the evenings, he would tell lots of stories of the Bible and hold revival meetings. This was very much his style of early ministry, which did involve more children. Later, he would take youth with him to imitate his witnessing in market places and homes. Sung would serve as a spiritual mentor.

[24] Wesley, "A Short Account of the School Kingswood, Near Bristol," in Works, Jackson ed., 3rd ed., 13: 283-02.

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This concept of the itinerant seminary is an ideal for churches and seminaries to consider as part of their pastoral and religious educator training.

Both Sung and Wesley, in their educational systems, advocated a strong sense of mentorship. Children and youth were taught about God by having adults mentor them in care and love. Wesley's mentoring of class leaders and traveling preachers is an example. Sung's itinerant seminary is an example of mentoring about five people at a time. Wesley implemented this concept broadly within bands and classes meetings, and Sung mentored youth and children in his early ministry of home worship.

Both Sung and Wesley would lament, if they were alive, to see teachers and leaders who themselves have not had a spiritual awakening and are not living in the Spirit. With such teachers, the curriculum would mean nothing and no lives would be changed. Sung and Wesley would work to inspire teachers and professors to learn from the Master, the Holy Spirit; they would motivate teachers to take students to mission fields and engage in life situations that could awaken students to the inner voice of God's calling for mission.

In conclusion, both Sung and Wesley tried to include the dialectical, dialogical and transformative dimensions of curriculum, combining the accumulated tradition of past wisdom and the present experience of the Holy Spirit. Wesley had a better organizational structure for the comprehensive curriculum. Sung integrated more cultural as well as personal stories in the curriculum, providing a wide spectrum of experiences for retelling the Bible stories in relation to Chinese experience. I suspect that, if they had been seminary

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teachers or deans, they would have sent their teachers and students out in the practical mission fields for a continual experience of holiness of heart and love. Some of the church's power struggles might be eliminated if, instead of trying to maintain their control, leaders would focus on God's mission and nurture a passion for spiritual awakenings and holy living.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy, as the definition of curriculum, also has many meanings. As Mary Elizabeth Moore points out, the simple combination of *pedin* and *agein* suggests that curriculum is the act of "leading people on a journey" or "leading across the earth."[25] In the light of Paulo Freire's, "pedagogy of the oppressed," pedagogy is a critical process for conscientization, practicing freedom and humanization.[26] Given these diverse associations and the broad definitions of curriculum discussed earlier, we need a broad understanding of pedagogy as well. Moore indicates that pedagogy is "an act of walking with, sharing with, acting with, remembering with, and constructing meaning with people in a learning community."[27] This definition of pedagogy suggests that teaching is the art of meeting people in the intersections of their lives and exploring stories and wisdom together.

In Mary Elizabeth Moore's definition of pedagogy, teaching as meeting has several comprehensive goals. These goals are:

[25] Mary Elizabeth Moore, Teaching: Meeting People at Intersections of Meaning. (Claremont: Claremont School of Theology, 1994), 1.

[26] Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970).

[27] Mary Elizabeth Moore, 3.

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> First, teaching is meeting the Spirit of life, the transcendent. Second, teaching is providing opportunities to meet other persons, other cultures, and other parts of the environment. Third, teaching is the meeting of texts-texts of the biblical and historical traditions, texts of living communities, texts of artistic and cultural expression. Fourth, teaching is meeting oneself, the inner life. Fifth, teaching is meeting pain and conflict.[28]

I find these goals to be very compatible with Sung's and Wesley's pedagogies, which focused on meeting with the Holy Spirit, although Moore's is more inclusive and holistic in relation to stories of other cultures, stories of women, and stories of pain.

In this kind of educational process, both Sung and Wesley affirmed the capacity of humans, initiated and led by the divine grace, especially after their repentance. What they would stress, however, is that, through repentance and a life of Holiness, one continues to interact with the Spirit, other persons, the biblical texts, inner voices, and the world of pain and struggle. Mutual interaction takes place between teachers and the learners. Both men believed that each learner can receive the full grace of the Spirit, as well as power to share grace with others; however, neither man developed a full pedagogy. Moore's metaphor of teaching as "meeting" connects John Sung's and John Wesley's inspiration for Spirit-centered pedagogy; it also presents a more holistic pedagogy. Building on this idea, I can identify five meeting contexts in the models of Sung and Wesley as spiritual practices.

Meeting through Prayer

Sung and Wesley showed that one of the main practices and activities each

[28] Ibid., 1-23.

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Christian has to encounter is to meet the Spirit through prayer practices. Prayer is the seed for spiritual awakening; in prayer we meet God as well as recognize our sins and struggles. For Wesley, prayer practice contributed to sanctification, as did actions to care for the world. Christians learn to be church through prayer when we intercede for each other. Wesley modeled prayer in his private life, and he wrote prayers and encouraged Christians to pray unceasingly for the church. One of the ways Wesley met other people's struggles was through prayers for deliverance during his visitations.[29] Wesley modeled "the stationary fasts" every Wednesday and Friday. He prayed and abstained from food before breaking the fast at 3.00 p.m. on those days, and he required his preachers to do the same.[30] For Wesley, prayer takes us to the will and heart of God.

Both Sung and Wesley emphasized prayers of confession, which were at the heart of their class and revival meetings. For Wesley, the content of the band meetings was confession. For Sung, every revival meeting began and ended with confession; and the witness that new converts shared was their confession. When this practice of confession was lost, the dynamics of the gatherings lost the transformative power whereby the grace of God took charge of their lives.

Sung went three steps further than Wesley. First, for Sung, prayer provided "wings along with the Scripture" whereby it took individuals and the

[29] Wesley, Works, Bicentennial ed., 19: 53-55. That record lists Wesley's prayer for deliverance during his visitation. Another was John Haydon's, which has been discussed in the Wesley chapter.

[30] Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called Methodists 44. Heitzenrater explains that Wesley was following the pattern of the Early church.

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church to a meeting with God; it was the heartbeat of revivals.[31] Through prayer, the church becomes more united, more loving, more aware of the will of God, more humble, and the church will have power to witness and experience revivals.[32] Second, Sung taught Christians to pray the Bible in order to be more aware of the will of God and to live toward holiness.[33] Third, Sung encouraged people to pray from the Spirit, following a free style instead of the written prayers. Sung never wrote any prayers for people to recite. In a way, he encouraged the freedom and creativity of the Spirit to take the lead. In this free style of praying, prayer is a vision, and directions come from the Spirit. This divergence from Wesley speaks to the heart of most Chinese spirituality. The prayer movement is leading Chinese churches, especially in Mainland China and Southeast Asia, to believe that through prayer people experience God's wonders in their lives.

Meeting through Scriptures

Both Sung and Wesley saw themselves as one-book men. Sung took this more literally than did Wesley. In Sung's later revivals he preached only the Bible, and he preached personal and new convert stories with lots of illustrations. Sung brought the Bible alive through stories, using it to bring people face to face with God. Wesley used not just the Bible but also other readings to illuminate the

[31] Sung, Hidden Manna, 1:15.

[32] Sung, Diary, 314.

[33] Sung, Hidden Manna, 1:1.

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inspiration of the Bible. Both made important connections of biblical witness to a contemporary experience of the witness of the Spirit.

Both Sung and Wesley faced a literacy issue with their audiences. Few people read; fewer read the Bible. Wesley wanted the Methodists to be "Bible Christians."[34] He compensated for this discrepancy by compiling explanatory notes for both Old and New Testaments and made them available at a reasonable price. For Wesley the Bible helps us to be restored in the image of God; it confirms our faith and increases true wisdom. Sung compensated for the literacy problem by teaching leaders through a Bible institute, and he told stories with lots of illustrations to help the audience remember major themes. Both worked on making the Bible accessible and connecting the Bible to Christian experiences.

Both Sung and Wesley applied simple methods for studying the Bible, using the Bible as a whole to witness and to explain related meanings within the Bible. They invited one part of the Bible to draw out the meaning of another part. They basically required Christians to be familiar with the texts in order to draw out deeper understandings. This method can be enriched further with other tools. However, this method encourages each Christian to build up their familiarity with the Scripture so they can relate other contexts and meanings. This method has its limitations when Christians only select certain texts and themes in the Bible to study. Unfortunately, Chinese churches tend to focus on a few themes of the Bible and dwell on spiritualized meanings. This tendency of not engaging in in-depth hermeneutics limits Chinese spirituality in its ability to transcend its horizons or to view the Bible from a wider perspective that would include more

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cultural resources. This tendency will also limit individuals' and churches' imaginations to connect their cultural story to larger stories including the Biblical stories. Consequently, it will hinder their spiritual awakenings.

Meeting through Witness

Both Sung and Wesley contributed greatly to the revivals through their practice of witnessing, especially in Bands, class-meetings and Sung's revival meetings. Through sharing witness stories, people met each other and they experienced one another's pain and sinfulness. Wesley provided a much better structure than Sung, with different kinds of bands, classes, societies, and lay speakers to practice sharing their faith. These groups also provided support groups for an accountable caring of souls. However, since this structure was based on confession and holiness of life, when confession is missing and leadership stops growing in faith, this structure also breaks down and the meeting turns into a social gathering. Both had created meeting places to nurture spiritual awakenings and lay leadership development through their witness. This provided great learning environments, especially for women.

Sung developed beyond Wesley by taking witness practices a few steps further. He required the new converts to witness before the congregation, which allowed the congregation to meet them. This action is provocative, since Chinese are very conscious of 'face' and pride. It would take a lot of courage to confess sins before the congregation, especially if a person's social status and education are higher than others in the congregation. Such witnessing reveals signs of the Spirit's work to empower one to transcend cultural pride. Sung published these

[34] Wesley, Letters, John Telford ed., 4:299.

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witnesses to further encourage a passion to witness for Christ and to affirm new commitments and grow in holiness. He challenged the new converts to form evangelistic bands of three to five people to go into the community to witness. The change brought about was drastic in some cases where the whole village was converted, as in the Nanchang revival. This boldness spoke loudly for Chinese community, saying that Christ is for the Chinese.

Wesley's witness groups were largely limited to people witnessing privately within the bands and class meetings, which perhaps reflected the cultural privatization of religion. Moreover, due to the requirement of the formal teaching of lay preachers, only chosen lay preachers did traveling and preaching, whereas, for the Chinese, religion is never private but made up of public affairs, of community celebrations and participation. Sung demonstrated to the Chinese through this witness practice that, when you become a Christian and experience the working of the Holy Spirit, you stand before the church asking them to rejoice with you, and you tell the village of God's grace; and let God continue the rest of the mission work. When missionaries miss this dynamic of the Chinese experience, Christianity can not be planted in Chinese soil.

Sung credits the power of witness to the work of the Holy Spirit and to the community living a life of repentance and prayer. This practice is yet to be restored in Chinese churches. When this occurs, however, Chinese churches will grow and be revitalized.

Meeting through Singing

In both Sung's and Wesley's revivals, music was an important medium for

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lifting hearts to listen to God, to their inner lives, and to the world. John Wesley had Charles Wesley write lively lyrics for Methodists to sing as new songs of salvation. Sung re-wrote lyrics to reflect the Chinese experience, and he used the choral works of many Chinese musicians.

Wesley was restricted by his ties with the Church of England in terms of music styles. Wesley's hymns had evangelical tunes; but they were more wordy. On the contrary, since Sung's revivals used very simple choruses, many Chinese souls remembered the songs fifty years later. This heritage has made Chinese churches more open to contemporary praise music, whereas many traditional Methodist Churches are still not open to contemporary music and a free style of worship. Chinese churches that are open to such a practice of praise have experienced tremendous renewal.

Meeting through Spiritual Journaling

Both Sung and Wesley were accustomed to self-examination through journal- writing. Each one kept a spiritual journal throughout their adult lives. As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Sung began writing his spiritual journal when he was17 and continued it until his death at the age of 42. Wesley began keeping a spiritual journal when he received Holy Orders at the age of 22, and he continued until his death at age 88. Unfortunately, many of Sung's original journals are still hidden or lost in China.

These journals reflected their piety, sincerity, self-nurture and accountability. Their journals also revealed their struggles and spiritual awakenings. This practice can lead souls to discern their inner voices, God's

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Spirit, and temptations, and to find connections to God. Wesley found this practice to be so crucial, that he encouraged his preachers to keep spiritual journals. He gave them two reasons. One is to hold accountability to God and leaders above them, and also it is a means of spiritual growth.[35] This spiritual journalizing invites one to a constant quest and dialogue with self and God.

Conclusions

There are many seeds for germinating spiritual awakening and living. Spiritual awakening does not occur out of one heroic call for repentance only, nor is it just for some special chosen ones. Chinese churches can not depend solely on some occasional revival meeting or altar call. Nor can Chinese churches depend on the revival norm as the main teaching of the church. If it does, Chinese spiritual life is in danger of withering. Chinese churches will suffer from spiritual malnutrition, and lay ministry will not be empowered to discern God's vision for holistic living and the continuation of God's mission.

From this cross-cultural study of John Sung and John Wesley, we have traced how their spiritual journeys have been influenced by God's actions in their lives, and by their family upbringing, inner search, church/mission experience, historical and cultural contexts, and spiritual practices. Their lives prove two things. The first is that spiritual awakening and spiritual formation can be nurtured-- through creativity, experiences of service and witness, and love. The second is also of interest for religious education theorists and practitioners. A story-telling and story-listening method can help persons awaken to God's

[35] Schmidt, 2: pt. 1, 109-110.

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mission and call. The lives of Wesley and Sung reveal that Christian religious education can awaken people to experience and live in the Spirit.

The purpose of Christian religious education is to prepare people to be awakened by the Holy Spirit for a continuing life of holiness, evoking their religious passions for missions and holistic living. The implications for Chinese Churches is that there are many ways and sources to foster spiritual awakening. Chinese churches can not wait on revivalists to restore faith; but the church has responsibility for spiritual nurture. Christian religious education is not aimed just at evangelization nor just at evoking passions for Christ. From our own rich heritage of John Sung and John Wesley, we can witness the fruit of Christian religious education. They have modeled for us the possibility of spiritual awakenings for mission and holistic living.

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